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## Propositions on Unevangelical Practice \*

1. Evangelical practice consists not in this, that we teach and treat nothing except the evangelical message (the Gospel), but in this, that we treat everything in evangelical fashion.

2. This means that since we expect justification before God, the renewal of the heart, and the fruits of the Spirit only through the Gospel, we in everything that we do have this one thing in mind, to give free course and sway to the Gospel.

3. For this very reason, when we follow evangelical practice, we do not discard the Law or make its edges dull through bringing in the Gospel, but we rather preach it with all the more seriousness in its full severity, however in evangelical fashion.

4. The Law is used in an evangelical way if it is employed solely for the purpose of preparing the soil for the evangelical message (the Gospel) and of submitting a divine norm for the manifestations of the new life which spontaneously arises through the evangelical message.

5. It is not evangelical practice to cast the pearls before the swine, but much less is it evangelical practice to keep them in one's own pocket.

6. Evangelical practice drops not one iota of the things which

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\* These propositions, written in German, were discussed at the 1862 convention of the Central District of the Missouri Synod. The original number was thirty-two, but lack of time prevented consideration of the last eight, and hence the latter are not given here. The name of the author, or authors, is not mentioned. But since the President of the District, the Rev. H. C. Schwan, later on President of the Missouri Synod, in his presidential address speaks of "offering" the propositions to the convention, he seems to have been the, or one of the, authors. The translation is largely the work of the sainted P. T. Buszin, School Superintendent of our Northern Illinois District. — A.

God demands, but it demands nothing else and no more than faith and love.

7. Evangelical practice demands manifestation of faith and love if we desire to be saved, but it does not issue commands about their various manifestations as far as aim, amount, and mode are concerned.

8. Evangelical practice demands fulfillment of even the smallest letter of the Law, but it does not make the state of grace dependent on the keeping of the Law.

9. Evangelical practice endeavors indeed to prepare the way for the operations of the Gospel by the Law; but it does not endeavor to aid the Gospel in its real functions by the Law; and since it expects the fruits of the Spirit to be produced solely by the Gospel, it is willing to wait for them, too.

10. Evangelical practice considers nothing an essential gain that does not come through the Gospel, that is, through faith; therefore it rather bears with all manner of defects, imperfections, and sins than to remove them merely in an external manner.

11. Evangelical practice limits pastoral care (*Seelsorge*) to specific applications of the Law and the Gospel; the scrutiny and judging of the hearts it leaves to God, the Searcher of hearts.

12. Evangelical practice insists on good human order, but still more does it insist on Christian liberty, and for that reason it lets *adiaphora* remain real *adiaphora*, that is, it leaves the decision concerning them to the conscience of the individual.

13. Evangelical practice is faithful in little things; yet it considers matters in their larger aspects and totality more important than individual details.†

14. To be wise as serpents, to redeem the time, not to let Satan gain an advantage over us, to become all things to all men in order that by all means some might be saved, are likewise elements of evangelical practice.

15. Evangelical practice is equally far removed from Antinomian and from legalistic practice.

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† This proposition is difficult to translate. The original reads: *Evangelische Praxis ist treu im Kleinen, hat aber doch mehr das Grosse und Ganze im Auge als das einzelne*. What the authors have in mind is, for instance, that preaching the Gospel to a large group is more important than restricting the preaching to a few, even though, through the time and strength thus gained, the hearers, by dint of meticulous supervision and drill, might be fashioned into exemplary Christians. The principle voiced now and then, *klein, aber rein*, if presented in an unmodified, sweeping form, would have struck the authors as emanating from Geneva rather than from Wittenberg. — A.

16. Evangelical knowledge and disposition should issue in evangelical practice, but do so rather seldom and slowly.

17. Usually we do not advance beyond legalism, or we fall into Antinomian laxity; to such an extent the Gospel is foreign to our nature.

18. There is danger in both directions. For us at present the greater danger is still in the direction of legalism.

19. Apart from the natural tendency of the old Adam and our origin in pietistic circles, etc., our present situation and the necessary reaction against the prevailing moral laxity in principles and in life are responsible for this state of affairs.

20. Or how many are there not who secretly fear more to give the blessings of the Gospel to an unworthy person than to deny them to a poor sinner or to curtail them? Whose conscience is not hindering him to follow the example of Paul and to become all things to all men? But where this is the case, one surely still finds legalistic practice.

21. Legalistic practice does not consist in this, that one does not treat anything except the Law, but in this, that one treats everything in a legalistic manner, that is, in such a way that one's main aim is to see to it that the Law gets its due and that one tries to accomplish through the Law or even through laws what only the Gospel can accomplish.

22. In addition, the more (as is often the case where the inner motive power really still is the Law) fiery zeal asserts itself which not even permits love to be the queen of all commandments, which spurns Christian wisdom as its counselor, and which even when it appears merely to teach, to reprove or to admonish, in reality applies coercion, and at that the worst kind of it, namely, moral coercion—all the more unevangelical our practice gets to be.

23. Unevangelical, legalistic practice is found not only in churches and congregations, but likewise in schools and in the homes, and besides in our fraternal intercourse.

24. The instances of unevangelical practice which are still most frequent with us in the realm of ministerial work, the cure of souls, and congregational government are perhaps the following:

a. In sermons: overabundant castigation (*durchgeisseln*) of individual sins, unwholesome conditions or perhaps even of matters of personal dislike—the portraying of well-known sins of well-known persons, instead of laying bare the bitter roots out of which all evil fruits grow—mere so-called testifying without real instruction and admonition—unnecessary or premature or unedifying polemics—urging that repentance and faith be manifested, instead of preaching that which produces repentance and

faith—a pietistic classification of the hearers—attaching conditions to the Gospel promises (*Verklausulierung des Evangelii*)—preaching faith preponderatingly as to its sanctifying power—presentation of the grace of God only to build demands on such presentation;

b. With respect to Confession and the Lord's Supper:

To demand more for admission than is absolutely required for its salutary use—schoolroom catechizing and inquisitorial searching of the heart of those announcing—postponing reproof till announcement for Communion or Confession—to use refusal of Holy Communion as a coercive, terrifying or disciplinary means—to refuse even when a state of unrepentance cannot be proved;

c. With respect to Baptism:

To be either entirely unwilling to baptize children of heretics or unbelieving people who, however, are in contact with the Word (*die unter dem Schall des Wortes leben*), even if there is no intrusion in somebody else's domain (*in ein fremd Amt greifen*) or only after various human guarantees have been given—to put the acceptance of sponsors on a level with admission to Holy Communion;

d. At marriages:

To refuse to perform marriages of people who are outside the congregation even if they are not manifestly wicked—a meticulous insistence on a certain form of parental consent and of engagement;

e. At funerals:

Absolute refusal of burial in the case of all who did not somehow belong to the congregation or at least requested the visit of the pastor—adherence to the principle that at every funeral the salvation or damnation of the deceased must be asserted publicly, that sins have to be castigated and the occasion must be used to take a fling (*anzustechen*) at the sins and failings of the survivors;

f. In the care of souls:

Constant trimming and pressing (*hobeln und feilen*) on everybody till all wrinkles have been removed—acceptance of every kind of gossip (*Zutraegereien*)—mixing into house, family, and matrimonial matters even if no public offense has been given—to judge of one's attitude of heart on the basis of a few words and works—the application of moral coercion through exaggeration, etc.;

g. In congregational government and church discipline:

Exaggerated demands at the reception of new members—a denial of, or peremptory fixing of time limits for, participation in



the spiritual treasures of the Church as a guest, especially for attendance at the Lord's Table — mandatory imposition of dues on church members, requiring the same amount from all — or coercive taxing of the individuals — use of church discipline as a measure against matters which are not evident, mortal sins, or even against self-provoked sins — to consider a person as convicted in his own mind or as opposing maliciously because he is not able to reply to the arguments and charges uttered against him, or even assents — to lay more weight on the correct form of the proceedings than on the achieving of the purpose of the discipline — to demand the same form and the same degree of publicity for all confessions of sins which may have to be made — the endeavor to make the chasm between those who are in and those who are outside the congregation really large, instead of building bridges for the opponents and for those who are on the outside.

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### The Hades Gospel

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The Gospel of a second probation, of salvation in Hades, of the possibility of conversion after death, is very popular today. Most of the modern theologians, liberals and conservatives, have become its heralds. It has found its way into the Reformed churches.<sup>1)</sup> It has found its way into the Lutheran Church.<sup>2)</sup> Statements like these: "The purpose of the descent of Christ into Hades was to preach to the spirits in prison, 1 Pet. 3:19; those who disobeyed in the past were now to have the Gospel preached to them, 1 Pet. 4:6, and to receive the benefit of the propitiation" (J. A. W. Haas, *The Truth of Faith*, p. 95) are being repeated in many Lutheran pulpits, magazines, and theological handbooks. P. Althaus is glad to record that "modern theology (with but a few exceptions) has swept away the limitations set by the old Protestant teaching which restrict

1) On the trial of Professor Charles Augustus Briggs, who taught that in the intermediate state certain unbelievers will be given another opportunity for conversion, see *Lehre und Wehre*, 1893, p. 162. The Presbyterian General Assembly called this teaching a dangerous hypothesis.

2) "Schleiermacher postulated in his *Glaubenslehre* (paragraph 161, 1) a continued probation after death. . . . This view became normative for many others. . . . The doctrine of the *descensus* also underwent a significant change. In contrast to the seventeenth century view, it was now regarded as a means of offering grace to those who are held in the infernal prison, and this redemptive work of the Savior was said to extend through all ages. The *locus classicus*, 1 Pet. 3:18-20, was interpreted as teaching the universal scope of salvation. Thus the doctrine of a future probation made its way into Lutheran theology" (O. W. Heick, in *The Lutheran Church Quarterly*, Oct., 1944, p. 432).

the preaching of salvation to man's life on earth" (*Die letzten Dinge*, p. 181).<sup>3)</sup>

This is the Hades gospel: "Christ passed into the unseen world and delivered His message to . . . souls that were awake to hear the glad tidings He brought them. . . . Christ went forth into another sphere to bear the message of glad tidings to the departed spirits of men who were there detained. . . . If the spirits to which He preached were the spirits of men who had died impenitent, it cannot be but that He preached repentance and offered them salvation" (H. M. Luckock, *The Intermediate State Between Death and Judgment*, pp. 52, 140). They call it the Gospel of the Hereafter. J. Paterson-Smyth: "Christ the triumphant victor 'descended into Hades' (Apostles' Creed) to proclaim the glad news to the dead (1 Pet. 3:18), to unfurl His banner and set up His Cross in the great world of the departed. . . . This was one of the gladdest notes in the whole Gospel harmony of the early Church. It told of the universality of Christ's Atonement. It told of victory, far beyond this life. It told that Christ, who came to seek and save men's souls on earth, had continued that work in the world of the dead. . . . Said I not well it was a Gospel of the Hereafter, a good news of God?" (*The Gospel of the Hereafter*, pp. 53, 61, 157.)

Which classes of men are made the object of the Gospel of the Hereafter? First, the heathen and all those in Christian lands to whom the Gospel was not preached in this life. P. Althaus: "In the future world Christ will come to all of those whom the Gospel did not reach in this life; there the decision will be made" (*op. cit.*, p. 181). A. Koeberle: "Christ can reveal Himself to the captive, troubled souls, and spirits, who heard nothing of Him here on earth, as their Judge and Savior, as their Lord and Redeemer" (*Das Evangelium und die Raetsel der Geschichte*, p. 71). Theodor Traub: "Those who were not called in this life enter the realm of the dead, Sheol, Hades, the prison (1 Pet. 3). . . . We are not ready to say that the New Testament knows nothing of the possibility of conversion in yonder world. According to 1 Pet. 3:18 f., salvation is offered to the spirits in prison" (*Von den letzten Dingen*, pp. 34, 83 f.). *The Pulpit Commentary*: "I cling to the hope that the preaching of the Savior on the other side of the grave will bring multitudes to heaven who died without a Gospel. . . . The myriads in the Roman empire who died without a single note of the evangel falling on their ears, may, if they will yet receive the Gospel preached to them, if they will read its blessed writing in the lurid light of the very flames of hell, yet be trophies of its

3) Stoeckhardt: "Most modern exegetes hold that Christ's *κηρυγμα* in hell offered salvation to the spirits in prison" (*Kommentar ueber den Ersten Brief Petri*, p. 158).

unspeakable grace and live to God in the Spirit" (On 1 Peter, pp. 158, 196). J. Paterson-Smyth: "But what of the souls who had gone out of the earth from the beginning of the world without knowing Him? The Church replies through her Bible, and through her Creed and through her early teachers, that the Lord was not forgetting them. He was about to go forth in a few moments, 'quickened in His Spirit,' to bring this glad Gospel to the waiting souls. That was the first great missionary work of the Church" (*op. cit.*, p. 63).

Among "the spirits in prison" there is a second class which is entitled to hear the Hades gospel. Among those who *heard the Gospel in this life* and did not accept it there are many who will be given another opportunity after their death. There are those who for one reason or another could not come to a full decision in this life. Kahnis: "We have reason to assume that in yonder world there is an intermediate state in which those who remained undecided in this world may make their final decision" (*Lutherische Dogmatik*, III, p. 553). H. Cremer "insisted that in the intermediate state such may yet be converted as died before they could fully accept the Gospel" (see W. Oelsner, *Die Entwicklung der Eschatologie von Schleiermacher bis zur Gegenwart*, p. 87). The Hades theology finds that there are three classes of men on earth. First, the believers; their salvation is assured. Second, those who have definitely rejected Christ, have hardened themselves against the Gospel, have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost; for them there is no hope. Third, a class in between; for them there is hope. S. Baring-Gould describes the three classes thus: "We see in this life the three classes, shading imperceptibly one into the other. . . . The first will be the saints of God. The last (those who love evil) will be cast into outer darkness. But the intermediate mass of mankind may surely be regarded as saved by Christ. God will bring the prisoners out of captivity, that is, those here described who were overcome of evil, not willingly, but through weakness. I think we are justified in holding that salvation will be for all but those who have sold themselves to work iniquity" (*The Restitution of All Things*, pp. 40, 152). The "Gospel of the Hereafter" has the same three classes. "There is no evading the thought that between these (who died in the fear and love of God) and the utterly reprobate there are multitudes of Christians and heathen in that Unseen Life today who belong to neither class, mixed characters in all varying degrees of good or evil. But it could not be said that they had consciously and definitely chosen for Christ. What of their position in the Intermediate Life? Our Christian charity prompts us to hope the best for them. . . . Those men that St. Peter thinks of had perished in God's great judgment,

but it would seem in their terrible fate they had not hardened themselves irrevocably against God. Those who do that on earth seem to close the door forever. That is the sin against the Holy Ghost. But these evidently had still their capacity for repentance. In the terrible fate which they had brought on themselves they had not utterly hardened their hearts—and Christ had not forgotten them in their misery. . . . Celsus laughs at the Christians: 'I suppose your Master when He failed to persuade the living had to try and persuade the dead?' Origen meets the question straight out: 'We of the Church assert that the soul of the Lord, stripped of its body, held converse with other souls that He might convert those *capable of instruction*'" (pp. 59, 66, 136). Archdeacon F. W. Farrar has the same three classes (*Eternal Hope*, p. 100 ff.).

In order to impress the point that the Hades gospel teaches that salvation is offered in Hades not only to those who never heard the Gospel, but also to many who did hear it in this life, we submit a few additional statements to that effect. Otto von Gerlach says in his commentary on 1 Pet. 3:18 ff.: "Among the dead there are many who are not irretrievably hardened; these may yet be saved in yonder life. . . . For them the possibility of conversion does not end with this life." Dorner is sure of it. "Dorner regards the intermediate state as one, not only of moral progress, but of elimination of evil and holds the end of probation to be, not at death, but at the judgment, at least in the case of all non-believers *who are not incorrigible*" (see A. H. Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 385). And the *Pulpit Commentary* asks: "Is it not possible that one of the effects of that suffering might have been 'to bring unto God' some souls who once had been alienated from God by wicked works, but had not wholly hardened their hearts; who, like the men of Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrah, had not the opportunities which we enjoy, who had not been once enlightened and made partakers of the heavenly gift, and the powers of the world to come?" (On 1 Pet. 3:20.)

The Hades theologians feel that certain considerations must move God to give some of those who have heard the Gospel, may have been under its influence for years and yet died in unbelief, another opportunity for conversion in Hades. They say that these men may not have had the benefit of the *full* influence of the Gospel; the force of their sinful habits, of the influence of their environment, of the strong temptations surrounding them kept them from embracing the Gospel. Ludwig Schneller declares: "Uncounted millions within Christendom have died who, indeed, heard the Gospel but never realized its full import and glory. They did not heed the call of Jesus; they have deserved their punishment, and they will undergo it. But for them there is a

gleam of hope in the fact that in yonder life the preaching of the Gospel still goes on, 1 Pet. 3:19." <sup>4)</sup> Luckock unfolds this thesis thus: "There are a thousand reasons which may obstruct the admission of the truth into a man's heart. It may not be offered for his acceptance in an adequate manner; it may be stopped at the very door by invincible ignorance or innate incapacity and want of apprehension; or it may be placed at a disadvantage by falling upon prejudiced ears, or, as is very often the case, it is met by an inherited antagonism. As Julius Mueller says: 'The same opportunity is open to those to whom, although belonging to the outer sphere of the Christian Church, the real nature of the Gospel has nevertheless not been presented; indeed, we may venture to hope that between death and the judgment many deep misunderstandings, by which numbers are withheld from the appropriation of the truth, will be cleared away.' . . . Till those gracious influences, which God exerts, have been brought into full and complete operation, the judgment is suspended, and it will surely not be delivered in any case before this has been fulfilled" (*op. cit.*, pp. 188—190).

Is there, then, no hope for those who have in this life definitely rejected Christ? Some of the heralds of the Gospel of the Hereafter, as we have seen, exclude these from its benefits.<sup>5)</sup> But there are those who preach the universality of the Gospel of the Hereafter. Martensen uses a general term: "the unconverted" — "Conversion must still be possible for the unconverted in Hades" (*Christian Dogmatics*, p. 463). So also the catechism of the Evangelical Synod: "Jesus went to the place of the departed spirits and brought them the message of salvation" (Question 67). And Irion's *Ev.*

4) Quoted from the article by Dr. J. H. C. Fritz in *Concordia Theol. Monthly*, VII, p. 436 ff.: "Eine Gnadenzeit nach dem Tode, die Vernichtung aller Gottlosen and andere Irrlehren."

5) Luckock states emphatically: "For all those whose circumstances are such that the offer of salvation has been fully and adequately presented in this life, the time of probation is limited; and there is nothing in Holy Scripture to induce even a hope that it can ever be extended beyond the grave" (*op. cit.*, p. 198). He is, however, disturbed about the matter. He says: "There is, however, one ray of consolation in the midst of so much that is dark and overwhelming. No human being can tell exactly what constitutes an adequate presentment of the truth to any man; God alone will be the Judge of that. . . . Ask any priest in charge of a town parish, say, of 20,000 souls, whether he can conscientiously say that the choice between God and Satan has been put before them in anything like an adequate manner. If not, then justice demands that, if not in this life, yet in the next they should have a proper trial" (*op. cit.*, pp. 188, 208). To be sure, God alone knows who has come under the judgment of obduration; we dare not be too positive about that. However, Luckock's presentation may easily cause those who have rejected the Gospel to hope, if worst comes to worst, for a second chance and to make the plea that the Gospel has not yet been presented to him adequately. We would say that Luckock is *practically* extending the Hades gospel to all men.



*Fundamentals* state that "the spirits in Hades can be saved if they now wish to accept the Gospel" (see *Popular Symbolics*, p. 315). C. M. Jacobs: "Christ descended into Hades, the place of the departed, that He might be their Savior, too" (*The Faith of the Church*, p. 62). Others use the emphatic terms "all," "everyone." The *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia*: "Christ went to the realm of the dead and preached the Gospel to *all the dead*" (italics in original; s. v. Hell). K. Hase: "In the future life, in the life beyond the grave, the real, the full call will come to every single one" (*Lutherus Redivivus*, p. 320). The *Pulpit Commentary* introduces its statement with a "perhaps": "The Gospel was preached to the dead, perhaps to all the vast population of the underworld" (p. 171). But Kuehl speaks categorically: "The purpose of Christ's preaching was to offer salvation to all the spirits without exception" (translation of the *Third Edition of Meyer's Commentary*, p. 752). And R. Rothe makes the sweeping statement that "in the land of the dead (*Totenwelt*) the offer of salvation will once more be made, in a most persuasive way, to those who remained unconverted during their earthly life" (see Oelsner, *op. cit.*, p. 32).

Th. Traub proves the universality of the Hades gospel in this way: "Since salvation was preached to the antediluvians, who in the days of Christ were considered with the people of Sodom the worst sinners, then it will certainly be offered also to all the others who are with them in the land of the dead" (*op. cit.*, p. 87).

Yes, indeed, declares Swedenborg, the future life is rich with opportunities for the unrepentant sinners. There is, he teaches, salvation after death, the spirits being "led from one society to another and explored whether they are willing to receive the truths of heaven; if not, they are sent into societies which have conjunction only with hell" (*Arc. Coel.*, p. 549. See *Popular Symbolics*, page 394).

A few statements to show how these men *glory* in the Gospel of the Hereafter. E. H. Plumptre, castigating "the narrower thoughts of a later, less loving and less hopeful time," sets forth how Jesus "passed into that unseen world as a mighty King, the herald of His own conquests"; the men of Noah's age "had perished in God's great judgment, but they had not hardened themselves against His righteousness and love, and therefore were not shut out utterly from hope"; "Zechariah 9: 11, 12 speaks of the 'prisoners of hope.'" "It is clear that the whole current of thought thus suggested sets in the direction of wider hopes than that which has been almost the stereotyped belief of most Protestant Churches during the last three centuries." "That larger hope — call it, if you will, that glorious dream — has never been without its witnesses. The noblest, loftiest, most loving of the teachers of the ancient Church (I am not afraid to speak thus of Origen) embraced it almost as



the anchor of his soul." <sup>6)</sup> "I have thought it right, friends and brothers, to bring these thoughts before you. For one who has been led to apprehend what seems to him a priceless but forgotten truth . . . it was a simple duty to utter the truth according to his power — to endeavor at least to comfort others with the comfort wherewith he himself has been comforted of God" (*The Spirits in Prison*, pp. 4—28). Bishop Gore's *A New Commentary*: "The Lord went to proclaim His Gospel in the realms of the dead (1 Pet. 3:19; 4:6). . . . Old words, such as those of Zech. 29:11, 12 ('prisoners of hope') probably acquired a new meaning. The teaching here given suggests a 'larger hope' than the Church has generally recognized." The *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia*: "Hades is a temporary jail or prison house. . . . But Christ's descent into Hades no doubt created a revolution in that dreary abode" (s. v. Hades). The *Pulpit Commentary*: "May we not venture to believe that even in that dreary scene the Savior's eye reached the thronging band of souls, and that His cross and Passion, His agony and bloody sweat might (we know not how or in what measure) 'set the shadowy realms from sin and sorrow free'?"

To sum up: "Our modern Origenists would convert Hades into a land of evangelization." <sup>7)</sup> "Nach der neueren Hadeslehre soll es ja auch noch im Jenseits eine von Christo bei seiner Hoellenfahrt errichtete Heilsanstalt fuer ohne Busse verstorbene Suender geben" (*Lehre u. Wehre*, 1874, p. 81). "Hades ist eine Art Wartesaal bis zur vollen Entscheidung" (see *L. u. W.*, 1871, p. 321). "Some of these men even go so far as to claim that all men have a second chance after death, that while they exist in this *Totenreich*, this Valhalla, they have time, during this waiting period, to repent. . . . They contend that Christ would never have preached to these souls in Hades if they were not to have a second chance to have their souls saved" (*The Pastor's Monthly*, 1934, p. 516). Is this a correct summary of the Gospel of the Hereafter? One of their own men summarizes it thus: "The unequivocal sense (of 1 Pet. 3:19) is: Jesus proclaimed to those spirits in the prisons of Hades the beginning of a new epoch of grace, the appearance of the kingdom of God, and repentance and faith as the means of entering into the same. . . . On Christ's appearing in the realms of death the declaration that was to be published to them was, as it were,

<sup>6)</sup> Dr. Plumptre does not teach the full apocatastasis of Origen. He says: "There is one sin only which 'has never forgiveness, neither in this world nor in the world to come.'" But he does consider Origen an authority on the Gospel of the Hereafter.

<sup>7)</sup> Quoted from H. Constable, *Hades*, p. 261. — These men will hardly take umbrage at the term "Origenists." Some of them like to quote Origen, and all of them operate with the principles which he applied in order to establish apocatastasis. — We shall discuss apocatastasis (Restorationism, Universalism) in a subsequent article.

thus: 'You have merited death both as to the body and to the soul; because of your disobedience you perished in the flood and were brought to this subterranean place of confinement; but a way of salvation has now been opened for you.' . . . This declaration encouraged them to accept the offered salvation" (J. P. Lange, *Bibelwerk*. Schaff edition).

Now, Scripture knows nothing of these things. Scripture explicitly tells us that at death men enter either heaven or hell. Man's life here on earth terminates, says Jesus, Matt. 7:13, 14, either in eternal life or in eternal death. He does not indicate that there is a third way of life which leads into "Hades" and via "Hades" into heaven. No, man's eternal fate is decided in this life. Men will be judged, on the Day of Judgment and in the hour of their death, according to the things done in the body. 2 Cor. 5:10: "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in the body." Men will not be judged according to what their souls did in "Hades," while their bodies lay in the grave. At his death man's eternal fate is already decided. Heb. 9:27: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the Judgment." It is not appointed unto men to die and after death another probation and after a second probation the Judgment. The time of probation is this life. "Behold, now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2), and this "now" does not embrace the future life; Heb. 9:27 and 2 Cor. 5:10 do not permit the extension of the period of grace beyond the grave. There comes an hour in man's life when "the door is shut" (Matt. 25:10), and Heb. 9:27 and 2 Cor. 5:10 say that that is the hour of his death. There is no passage in Holy Scripture which makes the exception: At death all men will be judged with the exception of those who never heard the Gospel or of those who were not in the right frame of mind when grace was offered them. Or: At death some men will enter heaven, some will be cast into hell, and a third group will be kept in "Hades" for further probation. No, when Lazarus died, his soul was received into heaven. And when the wicked man died, the judgment of God consigned him to hell, the place of eternal torments, Luke 16:23.—It is the clear teaching of Scripture that "at death the Christian immediately enters into eternal bliss, but the wicked is cast into the abyss of hell" (Luther, VII:1629). "Scripture declares that he that believeth not is condemned already; *item*, everyone will receive according as he has believed and lived" (Luther, IX:1245).

The Hades theologians, however, insist that they have Scriptural grounds for preaching the gospel of the hereafter. Their arguments will be examined in a subsequent article.

TH. ENGELDER

## The Lord's Prayer the Pastor's Prayer

### The First Petition

The Chief Shepherd teaches His undershepherds to pray: "Hallowed be Thy Name." Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:2.

Does not this Petition express that desire which is strongest in the pastor's heart? To entertain this desire, the Lord has prepared our hearts. We thank Him for such unmerited grace.

Some expositors borrow for further extension of this and the Second Petition the phrase of the Third: "on earth as in heaven." However, it cannot be proved that our Lord intended this construction, nor is it required to furnish a satisfactory meaning.

Some expositors follow Fritsche in emphasizing σοῦ, instead of looking upon it as the enclitic σου, and hold that according to the context in the Matthew record the names of the pagan gods stand in opposition to God's name. If this is the chief sense and emphasis of the Petition, then it is weak indeed. We put equal value on each word of this Petition. The opposition to God's name exists everywhere in this world, and to the end of time this prayer must rise with ever greater power. Besides the names of the pagan gods now worshiped there are others in every field of human thought and endeavor that clamor for recognition and honor. We do not speak here of those who strive even at the price of other peoples' blood and money to glorify their own names by reddening the pages of history and of national treasuries. Nor will we mention here the hirelings in pulpits, who live by their own names and not by the Gospel. Rather let us search our own hearts to discover whether at times we allow our name to rise in opposition to God's name. No sooner are we blessed with success in whatever work has been assigned to us, than we must kneel to pray this petition with emphasis on the pronoun; for a man scrambles to grab for himself as much honor and fame as possible. It is not the pastor himself, but his old Adam, who thirsts for glory. When he notices that the sermon we preached made a good impression, that the spiritual advice we gave solved a problem, that the meeting we attended profited by our presence, that our congregation is growing rapidly against serious odds and people are beginning to respect us as being quite indispensable in midstream and even print our name: then that smug old Adam must be hurled from his heights of fancy. Our name must decrease, and God's name must increase. How earnestly, humbly, and sometimes shamefacedly must we bow to pray that God's name be glorified, not our name. And are there Christian organizations existing only to perpetuate their own name under the name of Our Father? Let us think awhile.

The name of the new man is not in opposition to God's name. When God's name is hallowed, then also the name of God's child is glorified; for His name and that of His child are connected in Christ.

We note that the plural is never applied in the Scripture to the word *name* when that word refers to God's name, though the name of God appears also in plural form. The Holy Trinity is designated by that plural form. In this Petition the word *name* is a collective term and includes every name of God. The singular stands for the fullness of God's name. Therefore we do not ask what specific name of God is to be hallowed. The one name suggested by the immediate context of both records is the dear name Father. However, Jesus did not append the name Father to the Petition, nor does He designate any specific name to the exclusion of any other name of God.

What is the name of God? In a college classroom lecture Dir. M. Luecke answered: The name of God is everything by which God is known. Dr. Schwan says in our old Synodical Catechism: God's name is "God, as He has revealed Himself to us." We read from Luther's Works (St. L.): "In der ersten Bitte heisst 'dein Name' soviel als Gottes Ehre und Lob" (VII:771). The name of God may be arranged in definite order as it pertains to God's essence (*e. g.*, Ex. 3:14, 15), to the Trinity (*e. g.*, Gen. 1:1), to the Persons of the Trinity (*e. g.*, Matt. 28:19), to the attributes (*e. g.*, Ex. 34:6; Rom. 16:27; Rev. 1:11; 2:8), and the works of God (*e. g.*, Rom. 1:25; Job 19:25; John 16:7). Scripture speaks of the name of God as of God Himself. His name is as exalted as Himself. As man uses the name of God, he either adores or mocks God.

God is jealous of His name. He will not have it taken in vain. He glorifies it and wants man to praise and bless it, Ps. 103:1, and to adore it above all else. His wrath and anger strikes those who profane it; His mercy and blessing is upon those who hallow it. Since God is the First and the Last, the Lord's Prayer gives greatest prominence to the name of God, first and last. His name can be seen in its great splendor in each Petition that follows, for He is the King, the Ruler, the Provider, the Forgiver, the Protector, the Deliverer, the glorious Potentate. From this consideration we also learn that in the Lord's Prayer we address the Holy Trinity. At His name the ungodly tremble with fear, and the godly with joy.

The Christian has a personal interest in God's name. It pleases the gracious God to place His name upon His children. "They shall put My name upon the children of Israel," Num. 6:27. With all boldness and confidence Jeremiah prays to God: "I am called by Thy name, O Lord God of Hosts," Jer. 15:16. The same Prophet pleads: "Thy name is called upon us," Jer. 14:9. His name is

placed upon us by the blessing. Thus honored and exalted, we leave the service and the conference with appreciation of God's Word and rejoicing in our heart (Jer. 15:16). In trouble and distress we remind the Lord of this particular favor to us (Jer. 14:9). He cannot deny Himself. He would deny Himself by refusing the prayer of those who are called by His name. God's name has been conferred upon the pastor? Yes, the name that God bears according to His transitive attributes is the pastor's name. Yet the pastor is not proud and boastful. He adorns the name resting upon him by seeking the humility of Christ, and he remembers his unworthiness. God's name is upon us, and we are under it. It is our shield and fortress. Furthermore, God's name upon us is His image in us. His reflection reminds Him of His promises in Christ. These reflections are such Biblical names as Christians, children of God, the righteous, the godly. In bestowing His name upon weak men the all-wise God does not commit an act of indiscretion. No, it is His gracious way of glorifying His name by making us sinners and weaklings holy and strong to glorify Him. God's name is hallowed if we are justified and glorified by and in Him.

The suffix  $\alpha\zeta\omega$ , like the English *fy*, denotes action.  $\text{'}\alpha\gamma\iota\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$  is a denominative verb derived from  $\alpha\gamma\iota\omicron\varsigma$ , and its meaning is to make holy, to sanctify, to consecrate, to hallow. The Father has sanctified Jesus (John 10:36), that is, He has set Him apart for His divine purpose. Jesus sanctified Himself (John 17:19), that is, He has consecrated Himself entirely to the divine will and service. A sanctified person or thing is separated from persons and things profane, dedicated, and rendered inviolable. Frequently the word  $\delta\omicron\kappa\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$  appears where we might have expected  $\alpha\gamma\iota\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$ . But the two words are not synonyms. I would say that  $\alpha\gamma\iota\acute{\alpha}\zeta\epsilon\iota\nu$  is the first act toward  $\delta\omicron\kappa\acute{\alpha}\zeta\epsilon\iota\nu$ , and  $\delta\omicron\kappa\acute{\alpha}\zeta\epsilon\iota\nu$  is the completion of  $\alpha\gamma\iota\acute{\alpha}\zeta\epsilon\iota\nu$ , for  $\delta\omicron\kappa\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$  means to magnify further and exalt that which is already sanctified or is being sanctified. Both concepts demand an active agent and a passive object, even in the reflexive.

On the last day in the Temple, Jesus prayed aloud in the presence of all: "Father, glorify Thy name." The glorification of God's sacred name was ever in the heart and mind of Jesus. The answer of the Father was the promise of repeated, continued, and intensified glorification of His name. Jesus understood. In His sacerdotal prayer He indicates (John 17:1, 4, 5, 6, 26) how the promise is being fulfilled. Jesus effected the glorification of God's name among men, in this world where His name was not known. This glorification rested entirely on the Person, word, and work of Jesus. "The name of God is holy in itself" (Luther), and in heaven its radiance and effulgence beams forth brilliant brightness. Jesus



brought it down to this earth, revealed and manifested it to sinful men, to the fallen world. Here it is being misunderstood, profaned, denied. Jesus declares it "that it may be holy among us also" (Luther). Jesus teaches us to pray for the knowledge and grace of keeping it holy and in veneration, that we may see more and more, and declare with greater zeal, its unspeakable glory. We ask in this Petition that the revelation of God in Christ Jesus may be freely acknowledged, believed, and proclaimed by us, among us, throughout the world. Then God's name is hallowed as apart from and above every name, and adored by the Church on earth, which will continue its praise in heaven above. We express this as our greatest desire. Unless the Lord causes His name to be hallowed by and among us, His glory will nevermore be known on earth, and men will perish by their ignorance of God's name. We pray in this Petition for the knowledge of our salvation in Christ.

The tense of the verb is the aorist. It indicates "a long series of actions that are treated as a whole" (Robertson). Whatever number and repetition of sacred acts may be required, they are here viewed as forming an entity, the sanctification of God's name.

Again we look to Jesus. The unalterable Commandment says: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain." Jesus not only avoided the transgression of this Commandment, but He fulfilled, in our stead, what is enjoined, namely, the hallowing of God's name by praise and prayer. The hallowing of God's name is the office of Christ. The hallowing of God's name is the pastor's profession. It is the duty of every Christian. "Gott loben, das ist unser Amt." We ask that God may cause us to avoid and hate misapplication and blasphemy of His name, and to use it according to the revelation of His will to His glory and our benefit and blessing. Our ministry, if it adheres to the Word, is always successful, because God's will is the glorification of His name.

Jesus still performs His prophetic office by the preaching of God's Word. Nor can we hallow God's name unless we are faithful in proclaiming the Word in its truth and purity. Therefore we must enter deep into doctrine. We must indoctrinate the old and young by well-prepared sermons, giving heed to content more than to form — sermons more understood than admired. Without the sound doctrine our sermons, calls, work among the aged, youth work, and other pastoral obligations will fail. Our personal shadow must never obstruct the glory of God's name. Also the administration of the Sacraments is the means of hallowing God's name. Let us never tire from the effort of serving God, that His name may be hallowed. We mention here for further thought our task of rightly dividing the Word of truth.

Jesus also defended the true doctrine and attacked and ex-



posed all false doctrine. God's name is hallowed among us by controversy of the right kind. God has made us watchmen. Ezek. 3: 17-21. We are to contend for the faith, and we are to mark them that cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine. This belongs to our lifework of keeping God's name holy among us. What responsibility! It requires self-denial, courage, patience. As long as the old Adam is not fully subdued, false doctrine will rise and exist in all congregations. Be alert, and be patient to save an erring soul. We admire Christ's patience with His disciples in their delusions (Acts 1). But let us also follow Christ in His boldness, and let us attack and run down ravening wolves who would steal our sheep. The beauty of God's name unfolds to men in Christian polemics as well as in Scriptural irenics. When theology does not apply the whole truth, or when it ventures beyond the Scripture; when it socializes without or beyond the Law and the true Gospel, it simply ceases as theology and reels into modernistic glorification of man and mind. What do you say about the following evaluations of the Lord's Prayer: "The Creed of Christ"; "The Heights of Christian Devotion"; "The Social Manifesto of Jesus." These titles are not only shallow; they are unscriptural. But they are catchy. Whom do they catch?

Why does our Synod insist on the true doctrine? Why does our Synod expose and oppose all false doctrine and dangerous tendencies? It is because God hears our prayer: "Hallowed be Thy name." How our fathers hated false doctrine! How Luther spent himself in fighting it! Dare we weaken? It is an awful accusation which the Holy Spirit directed against the proud: "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you." The brethren may linger here to recall sad instances of inexcusable ignorance and sloppiness in doctrine and practice which at places have crept into the true visible Church and profane the name of God. (Veronica among the Stations of the Cross, and misrepresentation of Christ and Simon on the Via Dolorosa: in a Lutheran church. Denial of the Scriptural doctrine of inspiration: in a Lutheran church! Unionism: in a Lutheran church. High pressure collections: in a Lutheran church. Tolerance of the divorce evil.) God glorifies His name also by judgments against those who profane it.

False doctrine yields ungodly life. The true and pure doctrine yields a godly life. A godly life includes godly thoughts and words and deeds. Brethren, try to recall and review all the pastoral activity of yesterday, each in his own field of labor. If you can, summarize all this activity, and multiply it by the number of brethren in your conference. This may seem foolish; but it is the application of the aorist: many actions ordained by God (Eph.

2:10), viewed as one act, to accomplish the hallowing of His name. It is the reply to the question: How did the Father answer this Petition among us last Sunday? In the meantime He caused His name to be hallowed somewhere in the midst of bloody battle, somewhere by His judgments, somewhere by His grace, somewhere by a miracle, wherever He has recorded His name, in the church, in the school, in the sickroom, in the office.

God's all-glorious name from one point of view cannot be hallowed, that is, it cannot be made more holy than it is, but in our attempts to hallow it there can be progress — in greater frequency and extent, in our hearts, in our life, in our office, in the degree in which we believe, testify, live, through His mercy and grace.

We preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified. His name is The Lord Our Righteousness. God's name is hallowed among us only by the name of Jesus, which is above every other name. God's eternal wrath will strike the impenitent, loud-mouthed blasphemer who shocks us by his vain use of the precious name of Jesus Christ. His grace will bless those who adore the holy name of Jesus. For "all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him." John 5:23.

(To be continued)

G. H. SMUKAL

## Sermon Study on Eph. 1:3-14

### Eisenach Epistle for Trinity Sunday

This lesson is one of the *sedes* for the doctrine of election, or predestination. This doctrine is a doctrine for Christians, and its purpose is to strengthen the child of God in his faith and his assurance of eternal salvation. If we fear that our supply of water might run short, we go to the wellspring, and seeing the water gush forth in unabated abundance, we go home satisfied, care-free, happy. If doubts as to our final salvation, as to our endurance in faith harass us, we go with the Apostle to that inexhaustible fountain of grace which from eternity issues forth from that God in whom there is no change and who has called us by His Gospel, and drink deeply from this fountain and return to our daily work with the full assurance that there is plenteous grace for our salvation and with the firm determination by this grace to remain faithful unto the end, knowing who it is that has called us.

V. 3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."

Blessed be He that hath blessed us with all blessings. Εὐλογέω means to speak well, speak good things. The Apostle exhorts his readers to speak good things of God, to praise Him, to publish aloud His marvelous works. The very fact that God is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is sufficient reason for magnifying His holy name. Jesus Christ is the Alpha and Omega of the Christian's life. Phil. 1:21; Gal. 2:20. What would we be without our Lord, the Anointed Savior? Eph. 2:12 gives the answer.

Of this Jesus Christ, God is the God. So Christ Himself as a true human being calls Him, both in His humiliation, Matt. 27:46, and in His exaltation, John 20:17; cp. Eph. 1:17; Rev. 2:7; 3:12. What a glorious God must He be whom Jesus, our Lord, worships as His God! Blessed be He!

This God is also the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and because of this fact Jesus Christ is our Lord in the fullest sense of the term, our Jehovah, Jer. 23:6. Jesus, our Savior, is that Christ, that Anointed One, Ps. 2:2, set as God's King upon God's holy hill of Zion, to whom God has said: Ps. 2:7. Our Lord Jesus Christ is God's own Son, begotten in eternity; He is like the Father the one eternal I Am; cp. John 8:58. With this Christ Jesus we are united in faith, Eph. 1:1, and therefore the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is also our Father, v. 2. Blessed be He!

This God has blessed us, has spoken well of us. When God speaks, it is done, Ps. 33:9. He speaks not empty words, but realities, actualities. His words give and impart to us what they say. Num. 6:23-27. If He blesses, we are blessed, 1 Chron. 17:27. God has blessed us in every "spiritual blessing." Ἐν denotes the sphere or area of His blessing. The Apostle has in mind not material and temporal gifts, but gifts that pertain to the spiritual nature of the Christians, that nature engendered by the Holy Spirit; cp. v. 13. This blessing includes everything that has been given to the believer by the Spirit of Christ and of God, and is described in great detail in this letter and particularly in the epistle lesson for Trinity Sunday, chap. 1:3-14. It includes, of course, the first and greatest blessing granted to the readers when they heard for the first time the voice of God speaking good things to them in the Gospel and when by this Gospel they were brought to faith in the Christ, the Author of their salvation; cp. v. 13.

"In heavenly places." Ἐπουράνια in this letter always refers to a locality; not the visible heavens, however, but the supermundane heavens, the dwelling place of God and the angels, 1:20; 2:6; 3:10; also of the evil spirits, 6:12. The blessings bestowed upon the Christians are such as pertain to heaven, as originate in heaven and are of the nature of heaven, bring heaven into their

hearts and lives. God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places, withholding nothing, not even Himself; cp. 2:18; 4:6. "In Christ." All these blessings are connected intimately and inseparably with Christ, so that without Him not one of these blessings exists and in Him every one of these blessings is rooted. "In Christ" is not to be connected with "us," as if the Apostle stressed the fact that we are united with Christ, connected with Christ. While he addresses only believers in Christ, he emphasizes here that all their blessings originate in Christ.

V. 4: *"According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."* "According as," καθώς, is used here in a causal or explanatory sense, stating the reason why God has blessed us. On this usage cp. 1 Cor. 1:6; Phil. 1:7; John 13:34. God has blessed us in keeping with, in conformity with, another act of His. The blessing takes place in time, but that is not a haphazard matter, an arbitrary act. No; it is in keeping with another act of God that took place "before the foundation of the world," before the beginning of time, Gen. 1:1, in eternity. He "hath chosen us." Ἐκλέγω means to select, or pick, λέγω, out of, ἐκ. Hence it presupposes a number of objects, an aggregate, a mass, out of which some are chosen; cp. Luke 6:13; Acts 6:2-5. The aggregate out of which the Christians were chosen is not named here. Christ calls it "the world," John 15:16, 19. By birth and nature there is no difference between men. All men are born flesh of the flesh; all men belong to the "massa perditā." Out of this mass God has chosen, elected, picked us, says the Apostle, including himself with those whom he had called saints, v. 1, whom He has blessed, v. 3. The middle ἐξελέξατο designates this election as one in which He was personally interested, not a haphazard picking by blind chance. This election is described by καθώς as the basic act in conformity with which God blessed the Christians with every spiritual gift they possess; hence also with the gift of faith which united them with Christ. The καθώς therefore does not only place the election before the granting of faith so that the foreseen faith might have influenced or motivated the election, but this term designates our election as that act in conformity with which God brought us to faith. Hence the phrase "in Christ" cannot be connected with "us" in the sense that God chose us as being in connection with Christ. This construction is not only ungrammatical, since it would have to read ὅντας ἐν αὐτῷ or ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἐν αὐτῷ; it is also contrary to the text and context, which stresses throughout that in His election God was not moved by anything in us, but solely and wholly by His grace, and explicitly states that every blessing experienced by the Christian (and that

includes faith in Christ) came to them in conformity with, as a result of, their election by grace.

Why, then, does the Apostle add "in Christ"? In order to stress from the very beginning that this election was based on the redemptive work of Christ. In Christ and in His work alone God's gracious election of some to eternal salvation and to faith in that Christ is rooted. Without Christ no election and no elect. There is no arbitrary election just as little as there is an election to eternal damnation.

"That we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." With the Authorized Version, Luther, the Vulgate, and other interpreters we connect "in love" with v. 4, and not with "having predestinated," v. 5. The latter connection is less satisfactory, for (1) "it is Paul's usual, if not constant, habit to place ἐν ἀγάπῃ after the clause it qualifies, Eph. 4:2, 15, 16; 5:2; Col. 2:2; 1 Thess. 5:13" (Exp. Gr. N. T.); (2) the idea of God's love as the source of His predestination is fully brought out in vv. 5 and 6, so that there would be no necessity for this unique placement of "in love" before the sentence; (3) none of the clauses in this entire section begins with a prepositional phrase. Connecting "in love" with v. 4 makes sanctification the purpose of God's election which Paul has in mind here.

Love is all that God requires in His Law, love toward God and toward man, Deut. 6:5; 10:12, 13; Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:37-39; Rom. 13:8-10. In this love we are to be "holy," separate from sin, and "without blame," perfect, flawless; even as God, before whom we are to be perfect, not only before men, is holy and perfect, Matt. 5:48; 1 Pet. 1:14-16. This perfection in love, in Christian sanctification, is one of the purposes of our election. It was God's intention that in the midst of this crooked and perverse nation, out of which God chose us, His holy eyes might see holy people, unblamable in love. Blessed be God, who so honored us! Let His election to this exalted position of shining as lights in the world of sin and darkness be to us a constant incentive to walk in holy and unblamable love before Him.

V. 5: *"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will."* "Having predestinated," προορίσας, determined beforehand, foreordained. This points back to v. 4: "before the foundation of the world." Before we were born, even in eternity, God has foreordained us to the adoption of children. υιοθεσία is the term for the legal adoption of children, the θεσία stressing the fact that the child is not a child κατὰ φύσιν, by nature or birth, and the υίο designating this adopted child as one enjoying all the rights and privileges of a true child. By nature we were children of wrath,



but already from eternity God had predetermined to adopt us as His children. The προορίσας, having predetermined, is contemporaneous and practically synonymous with ἐξελέξατο, "hath chosen," v. 4. "God's counsel of election includes the predetermination unto adoption." Stoeckhardt, *Epheserbrief*, p. 48. "No real distinction appears to be made between the ἐκλογή and the προορισμός . . . the idea in the ἐκλογή being understood to be that of the mass from (ἐκ) which the selection is made, and that of the προορισμός the priority of the decree." (Exp. Gr. N. T.) Again the Apostle guards against arbitrariness by adding "by Jesus Christ." We owe our election to the adoption of children to Christ Jesus, who alone has made it possible for God to adopt us and therefore to predetermine us unto such adoption, though, unlike Christ, we are by nature not holy and undefiled but all as an unclean thing, Is. 64:6, of unclean lips, Is. 6:5. The "adoption," of course, is not restricted to the formal act of adoption but includes the state of adoption, membership in the household of God, 2:19, not only as servants but as beloved children, 5:1. "To Himself" connects with adoption and emphasizes the fact that though adopted, we are through Christ God's own, His very own dear children; while not born as the Son out of His nature, yet born of God, John 1:13, through water and the Spirit, John 3:6.

"According to the good pleasure of His will." It was an act, an election, motivated only by the good will, the kindly intent, of His will. Again the Apostle makes it very clear that, on the one hand, it was not a whim, a momentary upsurge for which no reason can be given, that prompted His predestination; it was good will, a purposeful, kind intent of God's will. And, on the other hand, it was an act determined by nothing within man, but by Himself alone. The Lord Jehovah, I AM THAT I AM, who is what He is by His own determination, does what He does because He so wills to do. "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy," Ex. 33:19. The election, or predestination, unto adoption is an election of grace, Rom. 11:5, 6. This thought is expanded in v. 6.

V. 6: "*To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.*" While vv. 4 and 5 stressed the purpose of election with reference to the elect, their sanctification in love (v. 4), their adoption as children (v. 5), the Apostle now focuses his attention on the purpose of God's predestination as far as He Himself is concerned. He predestinated us unto the adoption of children to the praise of the glory of His grace. In doing what He did, He manifested His grace, His free and unmerited favor, in the most glorious manner possible. No other doctrine shows forth in greater splendor, and praises more highly, the



grace of God than the doctrine that God already in eternity chose out of the mass of lost humanity certain sinners, no better than others, guilty like all others of eternal damnation, and determined to adopt these as His children, to bring them to faith, to bless them in heavenly places with every spiritual blessing that He possibly could give to mankind. Here indeed is mercy eternal, which far transcends all human wisdom and understanding. And what makes this grace still more incomprehensible, but on that very account still more glorious and still more praiseworthy, is the fact which the Apostle now adds.

"Whereby He hath made us acceptable in the Beloved." "Whereby" = on the basis of this grace He bestowed His grace upon us, compassed us with His favor. The Greek term occurs only here and Luke 1:28. As it was pure grace that favored Mary and chose her to become the mother of our Savior, so it is pure grace, the election of grace, God's predetermination, that moved God to adopt us as His children in order that His grace might be praised and glorified, which prompted Him to bless us with every spiritual blessing, v. 3. Thus to shed upon us the full measure of His gracious blessing did not cost Him merely a word, as it cost Him only a word to create heaven and earth and the fullness thereof. He made us acceptable in the only manner in which that was possible, in the Beloved, His own Son, Matt. 3:17; 17:5; Col. 1:3. This Beloved One is the source of all the blessings which God has graciously bestowed upon us, without any merit or worthiness on our part, yea, in spite of our sinfulness and damnable ness. That is brought out in greater detail in the next verse.

V. 7: *"In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."* In Christ we have redemption. ἀπολύτρωσις, a redeeming, a deliverance by payment of a ransom, a release, λύτρωσις, from, ἀπό, the power that held us captive. This power is at once described as the power of sin, which held us in bondage to do its will, to serve it, to produce only sin and iniquity and transgressions, the end of which service is death, Rom. 5:12; 6:16-23; James 1:15. From this sin and its bondage we are redeemed, ransomed, bought back to God with a price, 1 Cor. 6:20, a price no man could pay, Ps. 49:8, but an all-sufficient one for the redemption of all mankind, "His blood," the blood of Christ Jesus, the beloved Son of God. By the payment of this ransom He has obtained an eternal redemption, Heb. 9:12, on the basis of which we now have the forgiveness of sins for which Christ atoned, the remission of the debt which Christ has paid, that debt, that guilt, which would have condemned us to everlasting torment. And all this we have "according to the riches of His grace." All that we

have we owe to God's unmerited love and kindness. This wealth of grace to which we owe the forgiveness we enjoy now, our redemption in the past, even before we were born, is the same grace according to which we were predestinated, v. 5, chosen, v. 4. The election of grace is an election based on God's gracious decree of redemption conceived in eternity and carried out in the fullness of time, just as the eternal decree of our election is carried out in the blessings bestowed upon us for Christ's sake during our life here on earth and in the eternities of yonder world.

V. 8: *"Wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence."* This grace God showed us in an abundant manner in all wisdom and understanding. The Christian is no fool, not a person who never knows what to do, always undecided as to what course to take. By God's grace His children are made wise unto salvation. No longer are they in the condition described Eph. 4:18, 19; Rom. 1:22 ff.; 2 Cor. 4:4, but God has shined into their hearts, 2 Cor. 4:6; they understand God's wisdom, which the world regards as folly, 1 Cor. 1:17—2:10. This grace teaches them to lead a life pleasing to God, Titus 2:12; gives them that wisdom which regards sin service as folly, no matter how delightful and profitable it may seem to others; teaches them to regard the things of this world as vanity, Eccl. 1:2, as dung, Phil. 4:1-11; to apply God's Word to every situation they meet, to every difficulty confronting them, and always to prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God, Rom. 12:2. Stoeckhardt refers in this connection to Eph. 5:15 ff.; Col. 1:9 ff.; Phil. 1:9 ff.; Luke 1:17. Next to forgiveness of sin this gift of a wise, understanding, and obedient heart is the choicest blessing of our heavenly Father. Blessed be God for this gift, and let this grace urge us to make God's Word and will at all times the norm and rule of our life.

As a special example of the manifold wisdom and understanding with which the Lord has so abundantly endowed His children in the New Testament, the Apostle names the knowledge of a mystery, which is of particular importance in understanding God's plan for the salvation of man and which stands in closest connection with the doctrine of election and its implications for the Christian.

Vv. 9, 10: *"Having made known unto us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He hath purposed in Himself; that in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Him."* The construction of this passage presents difficulties. In my opinion the simplest construction is to regard the first clause as the principal clause,

the infinitive "to sum up" as the content of the mystery, and the other phrases as qualifying this infinitive. We translate: Having made known to us the mystery of His will [namely] according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself for administration of the fullness of the times to add up, sum up as in a heading or chief point, all things in the Christ, both those in the heavens and those upon the earth.

"Dispensation," *οικονομία*, composed of *οίκος*, house, and *νομία*, derived from *νέμω*, to own, rule, manage, denotes the management or government of a home or any business. "The fullness of the times" comprises, according to Gal. 4:4, the New Testament era, the era of fulfillment of all the prophecies spoken in the preceding ages, from Gen. 3:15 to Mal. 4, concerning the fullness of the times, the era of the Christian Church. For this era God had planned already in eternity, and for the administration of this era He had predetermined to "gather together in one all things in Christ." *Ἀνακεφαλαιῶ* occurs only here and in Rom. 13:9. The *κεφάλαιον* is the sum of a column of figures, which was placed not at the bottom but at the top of the column. The purpose of *ἀνακεφαλαιοῦσθαι* was therefore not to gather together and so unite what was scattered, but to add into one sum what had been lined up for this purpose, and the chief thing in this procedure was the sum placed at the top, the heading, *κεφάλαιον*. Therefore the noun denotes not only the "sum," e. g., of money, as in Acts 22:28, but also "the chief thing," as in Heb. 8:1. Bauer very properly defines the term: "confining oneself to the chief point to restate a matter, to recapitulate, to summarize." In Rom. 13:9 the two ideas of chief thing and summarizing are united. All commandments add up and are contained in the one chief commandment, love, in which all others are summarized. In the *Letter of Barnabas*, 5:11, we read: "The Son of God came into the flesh in order that the full measure of sin might be 'summed up' for those who had persecuted the prophets." In the enmity against Christ culminating in His crucifixion all the sins committed by the persecutors of Christ and His Word were summed up as in an all-comprehensive climax. Neither here nor in Rom. 13:9 the *ἀνακεφαλαιῶσθαι* retains its meaning of repetition; it is the exact equivalent of our "to sum up, to add up." Hence the Apostle means to say that in the administration of the fullness of the times, of the New Testament era, all things in heaven and on earth may be summed up in one word, Christ.

All things in heaven "summed up in Christ." God the Father, embracing in His protecting love all His children on earth gathered together in His house and sustaining them, body, soul, and spirit, does that because He, the Father of our Lord Jesus, is our recon-

ciled Father in Christ. The Holy Spirit, active in and through the Word in adding new spiritual stones to that spiritual temple He is building up as a habitation of God, does that because He is the Spirit of Christ. The holy angels are not only God's angels, but also Christ's messengers, worshiping Him and eagerly carrying out His missions; cp. Acts 5:19; 8:26; 10:7; 12:8, 23; Matt. 25:31; 2 Thess. 1:7; Matt. 13:41; 24:31. Our advocate with the Father, 1 John 2:1; Heb. 7:25; the joy and satisfaction of the souls in heaven, Phil. 1:23, and the sum and substance of their songs of glad thanksgiving, Rev. 5:8-13; the Judge of the quick and the dead, 2 Cor. 5:10; the Brother welcoming His brethren at heaven's gate, Heb. 9:28; Matt. 25:34; the light and glory of that new Jerusalem, Rev. 21:23; John 17:24; Rev. 7:17; in brief, the sum total of all things in heaven pertaining to the administration of the fullness of the times — Christ!

In like manner, all things on earth pertaining to the administration of the fullness of the times are comprehended in that one word — Christ. The Mediator between God and man, 1 Tim. 2:5; the body of all shadows, Col. 2:17; the Captain of our salvation, Heb. 2:10; the Author and Finisher of our faith, Heb. 12:2; the end of the Law, Rom. 10:4; the sum total of the believer's life, Phil. 1:21; Gal. 2:20; the Cornerstone and Head of the Church, Eph. 1:22; 2:21; the Prophet and Revealer of God, John 1:18; the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Heb. 3:1; the King of kings and Lord of lords, Rev. 17:14; the Director of all our ways, 1 Thess. 3:11; the mystery of godliness, 1 Tim. 3:16; the Victor over death, 1 Cor. 15:55-57; the Resurrection and the Life, John 11:25, 26; our Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption, 1 Cor. 1:30; all things add up in that one word — Christ!

In the Old Testament it was Jehovah who was the God of the Covenant, in the New Testament it is pre-eminently Christ, the Anointed One, our Brother according to the flesh, the God-man, who is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the Ending, with respect to the administration of the New Testament Church of God; cp. 1 Cor. 15:22-28. That is the mystery, unknown to natural man, revealed in the fullness of time, pre-ordained by the Lord in eternity. What this mystery has to do with our election is stated in the next verse.

V. 11: *"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."* "In whom" points back to "in the Christ," v. 10. That Christ in whom the administration of the New Testament era is summed up is the same in whom we were also chosen in the ages before time. This is the only time

that *ἐλεγχω* occurs in the New Testament, and there is no reason why we should deviate with the A. V., Luther, and most commentators from the only sense in which it is used in the entire Greek literature: "to choose," and to force upon it the meaning "to obtain a heritage." The only seemingly valid argument for the latter translation is the connotation of chance, or a "divine fate" which the Greek term might have etymologically, "to choose by lot." Yet the word is also in classical Greek used in the sense of choose, irrespective of any chance or blind fate. And the latter idea is completely excluded here by the preceding and following context. The Apostle had stated in vv. 4 and 5 that we were chosen in Christ; in vv. 6 and 7 he had stated that this election was based on His work of redemption. Now he points out the comforting truth that we were chosen in Him in whom is vested the entire administration down to the least detail of the New Testament era. That is the guarantee that He will carry out to the full the decree of our election. Our salvation from its beginning in eternity before Creation to its consummation in eternity after the end of time rests in the hands of God the Father and of Him who is the Administrator of the New Testament era, our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the thought expressed in the next clause.

Being predestinated (cp. v. 5) according to the purpose of Him who works, puts into effect, carries to completion, all things according to the counsel, the well-considered and carefully devised plan, of His will. We note again the exclusion of all chance in God's will. As in all things, so in our fore-ordaining God was not moved by a momentary whim, much less did He act without consideration. Our election owes its origin to careful planning of Him who carries out what He has proposed to do. Our election is sure, resting on Christ's redemption and being, buttressed on the one side by the Son who manages the New Testament era, on the other by the Father whose power "brings to being what His unerring wisdom chose."

V. 12: "*That we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ.*" The Apostle points out the purpose of election and its glorious result with reference both to God, whose grace is praised and glorified by this marvelous act, and with reference to us, who by reason of our election have the honor of being objects of so glorious and praiseworthy a grace. The participial clause links up with "we," *ἡμᾶς*, and qualifies the pronoun as referring above all to those who have "first trusted in Christ," those believers who had already in the Old Testament hoped for and trusted in the promised Messiah, both hope and trust being expressed by *προηλπικότες*. Particularly he thinks of such among his readers as had been believers while still members of the Jewish



Church and were now, like him (hence ἡμᾶς), members of the Church of Christ. The congregation at Ephesus, however, was made up not only of former Jews, but was pre-eminently a Gentile-Christian congregation: cp. Acts 19:8, 9, 17-20, 26, 27. To these former Gentiles, Paul addresses the next words.

Vv. 13, 14: *"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory."* "Ye also," the former Gentiles. They had heard "the Word of the Truth," "the Gospel of your salvation." While during the Old Testament era Israel was the elect nation of God, Ex. 19:5, 6, the salvation promised to the Jews was preached in the fullness of time to the Gentiles also, and not as a salvation for whose attainment a Gentile had to become a Jew by submitting to circumcision and the rituals prescribed to the Israelites, but as a salvation which is "your salvation," the salvation of all peoples and nations. There is but one salvation for Jew and for Gentile, but this salvation is preached and offered to Gentiles as Gentiles. While coming from the Jews, John 4, it is universal salvation; cf. Acts 15. This proclamation of the Gospel had its desired effect. They also believed in the Word they heard. "In whom" here does not resume the first "in whom" but refers to "the Word" and should be translated "in which." And because they believed the Word of the Truth, the Gospel of their salvation, they were at once, without becoming Jews, sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise; cp. Acts 10:44. The Spirit promised in the Old Testament as a special gift of the New Testament era, Joel 1:28, 29, and promised by Christ to His disciples as their Paraclete, John 14:16, 26; Acts 1:4, 5, had been shed on them abundantly through the Word of Truth accepted by them in faith. Cp. Gal. 3:2. With this Spirit they have been sealed. "We place our seal on what we mean to declare our own over against any alien claims, or what we want to render safe and secure from the hands of others, or what we acknowledge publicly before the eyes of all." (Hofmann, quoted by Stoeckhardt, *Epheserbrief*, p. 78 f.) Thus the Christians at Ephesus, though Gentiles by birth, were acknowledged by the Lord Himself as His own, as years before Christ had miraculously acknowledged the Gentile Christians at Caesarea, Acts 10:44 ff. Thus God the Father and His anointed Administrator of the fullness of times had made of Jews and Gentiles one Church by bringing both to faith in Christ and sealing both with the Holy Spirit of promise, uniting both with the Christ and God, the Father of their Lord Jesus Christ, v. 1. And



to this one holy Christian Church, composed of Jews and Gentiles united with Christ, the Apostle turns in v. 14.

"Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory." The Holy Spirit is more than a mere seal. He is God's own Spirit, whose indwelling makes the Church and the individual Christian God's temple, 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19, 20, because He is the Third Person of the Trinity, inseparably connected with the Father and the Son in one indivisible Being, 2 Cor. 13:14; Deut. 6:4. Since, therefore, with the Holy Spirit God Himself, His heaven, has come into our hearts, He is very properly called the earnest of our inheritance. Earnest money is money paid in advance to bind a bargain. While men may default, God is the God of Truth, 2 Cor. 1:20. "The 'earnest of the Spirit' is mentioned by itself in 2 Cor. 5:5; in 1 Cor. 1:22, as here, it is introduced along with the *sealing* of the Spirit. To the truth expressed by the latter it adds the higher idea that the believer possesses already in reality, though but in part, the life of the future; the inheritance of the present and the inheritance of the future differing not in kind but only in degree, so that even now we have the life and blessedness of the future in the way of foretaste." (Exp. Gr. T., p. 269.)

"Of our inheritance until the redemption." Until, *εἰς*, unto, denotes the direction to which the pledge or earnest points, the purpose "unto" which it is given. That is redemption; the term as in 1 Cor. 1:30 is here used in the sense of final and full redemption, everlasting salvation. "Of the purchased possession," *τῆς περιποιήσεως*. This term occurs again 1 Pet. 2:9; the verb Acts 20:18. It is a synonym of *περιούσιος*; cp. Titus 2:14, which latter term is the usual translation of the Hebrew *מְנוּחָה*, property, one's own. (Mal. 3:17 the LXX translates *εἰς περιποίησιν*.) It is used of Israel as God's own people, peculiarly His own from out of all nations; cp. Ex. 19:5; Deut. 7:6; etc. The redemption of God's people is that rest of which Heb. 4 speaks; cp. Is. 25:8; 35:11; 1 Cor. 15:54 ff.; Rev. 7:9-17; chap. 21:22.

"Unto the praise of His glory." Once more, for the third time (cp. vv. 6, 12), the final purpose of God's plan of salvation is named as a fitting conclusion to the whole section which praises and magnifies the glory of God. Yea, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

In the standard Epistle for Trinity Sunday, Rom. 11:33-36, the holy Apostle magnifies in awed reverence the unsearchable wisdom of God in His ways and judgments particularly with reference to the doctrine of predestination, of which he had spoken at great length in the preceding chapters. It is this same doctrine to which

he calls his readers' attention at the very beginning of his letter to the congregation at Ephesus. The pastor should not be afraid to preach on this doctrine, which, while it passes human understanding, is clearly revealed in Scripture as a part of that whole counsel a preacher is to declare to his congregation, Acts 20:27. This doctrine may be presented from various angles on the basis of our text.

*We praise God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.* (1) We praise the Father, who has chosen us unto the adoption of children, vv. 1-6. Praise Him by unblamable holiness and love, v. 4 (2) We praise the Son, in whom we have redemption, vv. 6-12. Praise Him by refraining from those sins from which His blood bought us. (3) We praise the Holy Ghost, with whom we are sealed, vv. 13, 14. Praise Him by hearing, believing, and living according to the Gospel through which He speaks to us. — Referring in the introduction to Acts 15:18 and referring briefly to the decrees of creation, preservation, redemption, point out that in regard to our salvation He has not only determined to redeem us, but that our text speaks of a choice, an election, a predestination unto sonship and salvation. *God Hath Chosen Us!* We ask: (1) Whom did He choose? (2) What prompted Him to choose? (3) For what purpose did He choose? — One meets with so many misconceptions of the doctrine of predestination. *What Is the Nature of God's Predestination unto Salvation?* (1) It is not an arbitrary election, but it rests on Christ's redemption. (2) It is not an election on the basis of our works or our faith, for it is an election by grace. (3) It is not an election which breeds neglect of sanctification, for it is an election unto adoption and holiness. — All Scripture is profitable, 2 Tim. 3:16. *Some Practical Uses of the Doctrine of Election.* (1) It keeps us humble by reminding us of our unworthiness. (2) It strengthens our assurance of our eternal salvation. (3) It fills our heart with joy and praise. (4) It incites us to sanctification of our lives. — *The Immovable Basis of the Christian's Assurance of Salvation.* (1) God's election. (2) Christ's redemption. (3) The sealing with God's Spirit. — *Christ the Alpha and Omega of Our Salvation.* (1) In Him we are chosen unto the adoption of children. (2) In Him we have the redemption through His blood. (3) In Him we have been sealed with the Holy Spirit.

THEO. LAETSCH



## Outlines on Gospels Adopted by Synodical Conference

### Ascension Day

Luke 24:50-53

The doctrine of Christ's ascension is of primary importance. Only when this doctrine is believed, can Christ's work for and in His Church be properly understood; only then can believers successfully carry on their work.

#### Mounting up the Glory Road

##### *1. Its significance for Christ.*

The work of redemption had been completed. It was proved to be sufficient (resurrection). The Apostles had received further instruction. Acts 1:3. To accomplish world-wide distribution of the Gospel, Matt. 28:19, 20, Christ ascended into heaven.

The ascension had an impressive prelude. Jesus directed His disciples from Jerusalem out toward Bethany, a place rich in memories. John 11; Matt. 26:6. Acting as the great High Priest, He blessed them. Cf. Lev. 9:22. By raising His almighty hands of grace He signified the actual conveying of divine blessing.

The Savior's purpose in coming into the world was to gain for mankind the blessing of redemption. John 12:47. Fittingly, His final act was a benediction. In the midst of blessing His visible presence was withdrawn from the disciples. Christ needed no witnesses to His resurrection; His disciples saw Him afterward; but the ascension was to be a visible parting from the disciples to establish this act as a historical fact for the Church of all time.

Christ's ascension into heaven was not merely the entering into the abode of the blessed, Phil. 1:23; but also to the right hand of God, 1 Pet. 3:22. By His ascension far above all heavens He filled all things, Eph. 4:10; and "being everywhere present, not only as God, but also as man," He "rules from sea to sea." Formula of Concord, Thor. Decl. VIII, 27. In ascending into heaven, Christ did not enter upon a period of inactivity, but actively, also as man, assumed the full reign over all creatures. Acts 2:34-36; cf. Ps. 8:1, 6. Cf. F. C., Thor. Decl., VII, 119.

In ascending, Christ truly mounted up the glory road. For Him it meant (1) that He might sit on the right hand of the Father, (2) that He forever reign over all creatures, (3) that He might sanctify the believers. Augsb. Conf. III, 4 and 5. But it has a wonderful significance also for the believers.

##### *2. Its significance for the believers.*

In regard to God. The disciples worshiped Jesus. This worship was no longer connected with the hope of obtaining temporal

power, Matt. 20:20, but given to the Lord of Glory, Acts 2:36. It was connected not only with a better understanding but also with a firmer faith. In showing the significance of Christ's ascension for the disciples, the text appropriately mentions their worship in the first place. John 5:23. Our observance of Ascension Day is in vain unless it leads us first of all to worship the Savior.

In regard to themselves. The grace bestowed upon the disciples by the exalted Lord filled their life with great joy. Cf. Acts 8:39. They were happy in their position (believers, witnesses) and in their hope (Pentecost, heaven). Christ's ascension influences our whole life. Luke 12:34. Faith in the ascended Lord gives our soul strength to rise above all temporal grief. We have the same Word and assurance given the Apostles.

In regard to others. Publicly, regularly, they met in the Temple and bore testimony of their faith. In the Temple, where most Jews congregated, the disciples praised God, openly declared the wonderful things of their Savior. Faith in the ascended Christ causes us to bear witness by regular church attendance, personal mission work, and support of local and synodical church work. The blessing of Christ's ascension must be shared with others.

*Conclusion.*—Ascension Day a day of thanksgiving. Christ mounted up the glory road—an exaltation for Him, a blessing for us. Lam. 3:41.

VICTOR MENNICKE

### Exaudi

John 8:12-20

Between Ascension and Pentecost. As we think of the fact that Christ is not with us visibly since the Ascension, a complaint may arise in our hearts—wouldn't it have been much easier for us to believe in Him if He had continued with us visibly? Text, however, indicates that many doubted even when they saw Him in the flesh. The Savior told His disciples that seeing was not the basis for accepting Him. John 20:17, 29. Then

#### How Can We Believe What Jesus Said About Himself?

1. *If we understand what He really claimed about Himself*
2. *If through His witness we come to more than a mere fleshly faith*

#### 1

A. Jesus says that when men know Him, they know the Father also. V. 19.—1. In Christ God's truth and grace is revealed to the world. John 1:14, 18.—2. Christ revealed the Father by demonstrating His plan and love for the world through His redemption; and by speaking of Him.—3. Hence when Christ speaks of

Himself and describes His own work in the world, He makes the Father plain to men. 1 John 3:16 a.

B. Jesus says His record is true; as the true Son of God, He is in a position to say the truth about God; He is One with God. V. 14.

C. Accordingly this witness of Jesus to Himself refutes human objections. — 1. The Pharisees objected that Christ had no corroboration for His claims. Christ points out that according to their own rule of evidence, He had corroboration — the word of the Father. Vv. 17, 18. Through the prophecy of the Old Testament, through direct statements, *e. g.*, at Jesus' Baptism and Transfiguration, through the correspondence between God's word and will and the Savior's, through Christ's resurrection, the Father's witness is evident. — 2. The Savior points out furthermore that His detractors were in no position to criticize. Not only did He have divine witness to the truth of His teaching; but since that teaching was divine, they were, as human beings, not in a position to declare it false or unsupported. V. 14.

## 2

A. The Savior wants us to believe on Him for more than human reasons; with more than earthly insight; "ye judge after the flesh" — that is not enough. V. 15.

B. He Himself provides this gift of understanding and trust which is faith in the highest degree — "I am the Light of the world." — 1. The illumination necessary to find in Christ the Son of God and Savior of the world is a superhuman gift, the work of God and His Spirit. "I am," v. 12; Matt. 16:17; 1 Cor. 2:14-16. — 2. Christ is the fact because of which this illumination comes to man. Without Him and His work, man is in darkness; he does not know the way to God or understand the Father. V. 19. Christ's work of redemption restores the relation between God and man that had been severed by man's sin, it renews the true Life of God in man; "in Him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men." John 1:4. — 3. Therefore "he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." V. 12. That is an invitation. Jesus wants us to follow Him, *i. e.*, count on His work as the source of our life and the story of His work as the source of our light. Faith in the highest sense does not wait for rational proofs or regard them as the bolster of true faith at all: but it follows Christ and thereby lays hold on true life. By using the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the fact of His redemption, man comes not merely to a rational belief in Jesus, but actually to the witness of God in his own heart. 1 John 5:8-12; 4:13-16.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER



**Pentecost Sunday****John 14:15-21**

Jesus at one time asked Peter: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" (John 21:15-17.) That question must be addressed to each of us. Before you answer, remember, love does not mean merely lack of hatred. No, love means intense devotion. If we love a person, that person is very dear to us. We enjoy his company. We love to hear him praised.

What about our love for the Lord Jesus? Do we love Him, not only in word, but also in deed and in truth?

This is a very serious matter! The holy Apostle in one place hurls an intense curse against everyone who does not love the Lord Jesus (1 Cor. 16:22). On the other hand, the one who loves Jesus is a truly blessed, rich, and fortunate person. Our text points this out to us.

**Blessed, Yea, Richly Blessed Is Every Lover of the Lord Jesus****1**

*Because this love, in its very nature, is a most precious possession.*

a. The Lord Jesus is worthy of our love. Our text indicates that the heavenly Father, the holy and pure God, loves Jesus, v. 21. The Father loves Jesus so much that He loves also those who love Jesus. God is so well pleased with Jesus that He has given Him a name that is above every name. He has made Him King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The Father loves Jesus because Jesus is so lovable. He is without sin, He is perfect, holy, pure, and without blemish. To love such a pure and good person will make us happy in the thought that our affection is so well placed.

b. Moreover, in loving Jesus we are loving One who loves us. 1 John 4:19. He has taken from us our most painful and shameful burden and has given us an inheritance of priceless value and everlasting, imperishable quality. 2 Cor. 8:9. — To recognize this is to love Him as the Giver of all this treasure—that itself is happiness. No wonder that they who love the Lord Jesus sing such beautiful hymns of Him, e. g., "Jesus Christ, my Pride and Glory;" "Beautiful Savior;" "Jesus, Lover of my soul," etc., etc.

Yea, blessed are the lovers of Jesus. Their heart is full of joy, their lips overflow with praise of the heavenly Bridegroom.

**2**

*Because this love of Jesus enters our heart from such a pure and holy Source.*

a. It is not created in us by some polluted lust, it does not originate from the low and shameful desires of the flesh which

drag men down into the mire of carnal self-indulgence, it does not come from the infatuation created by some deceitful person or by Satan himself. Adam and Eve were infatuated with the forbidden fruit. How miserable that deceitful lust made them. The Israelites were made wretched by their longing for the fleshpots of Egypt. David was humiliated by the lust of the flesh, Judas was ruined by his love of the thirty pieces of silver. Thus there are many whom an unworthy love holds captive. Poor souls whom the love of the world, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life are holding in bondage! Such unholy love sets the heart aflame with the fire from hell.

b. Our text points out to us the true Source of this precious love of Jesus. It comes from the Holy Spirit Himself. Text, vv. 16, 17. This Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus, John 16:14. He is the One who paints for us the picture of the Babe that was born for us, of the Savior who went about loving the outcast, the dejected, the sorrowful, the suffering, and helping them. The Holy Spirit paints for us the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep. He it is who makes the invitation of Jesus effective: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," and, "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out." Do not be afraid of this love deceiving you, as the love of the world deceives so many. Do not be afraid of too intense a love of the Lord Jesus. This love is created in our hearts by the holy God Himself, who by His Word creates faith in Jesus, and this faith "worketh by love." Therefore Peter testifies: 1 Pet. 1:8.

Is not the lover of the Lord Jesus a blessed person? In such a one the Holy Spirit is at work making the heart a temple of purity and bliss.

Application: Be sure to give the Holy Spirit every opportunity to create this pure love in your heart, so that you may rejoice in this love of Jesus. The Holy Spirit works through the Gospel, Rom. 1:16 and Gal. 3:1-5. Hymn 351.

### 3

*This love of Jesus leads us to obey the commandments of Jesus.* Text, vv. 15 and 21.

a. Besides those who are enslaved by shameful vices, like Ahab and Herod, there are others who because of the threats of the Law or because they see the misery caused by gross vices, because they fear the consequences, force themselves to lead an externally respectable life, they may even make sacrifices; but, oh, how miserable they are! Such people are in bondage, they feel their slavery, they groan under their miseries, some of them actually become tired of making sacrifices and of being "good,"

and run into the vilest courses, like the Prodigal Son. Many of them never return, but perish with the swine. Their so-called goodness is nothing but hypocrisy and slavery.

b. But all this is cured by the love of Jesus. When the Holy Spirit fills our heart with love for Jesus, then we recognize that Jesus' yoke is easy and His burden is light. Text, v. 15. It is well known that whatever we delight to do becomes easier. Thus we hear of the disciples that they *rejoiced* because they were accounted worthy to suffer shame for Jesus' name, Acts 5:41. Do you think it was a hardship for Mary to sit at Jesus' feet and hear His word? Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. In spite of all that he suffered by preaching Christ, Paul rejoiced in the fruits which he saw of his labor in different places: in Philippi, in Ephesus, and in Thessalonica. He made requests "*with joy*." He remembered these souls with thanksgiving. Yea, blessed are they in whose hearts the Holy Spirit has created true, intense love of Jesus, to them the obeying of God's holy commandments becomes a joy. Even the burden and the cross of Christ are borne with patience. That beautiful hymn of praise "Oh, that I had a thousand voices" was composed by John Mentzer in the midst of tribulations. He declared that he wished to prove to the world that a lover of Jesus is happy even when bearing the cross.

c. Our text impresses upon us that in such a lover of Jesus God Himself, the Father, the Holy Spirit, and the Son, come and dwell. Where God dwells, there goodness, love, and joy are at home. What a beautiful temple of God a human being thus becomes. Instead of the poisonous vipers and the filthy, slimy serpents of wickedness, lust, envy, hatred, there lives in this temple the Father, who loves man more than Father and Mother love the child; the Holy Spirit, whose very presence insures purity; the Lord Jesus, who is mighty to save and to guide. Such a heart is the most sacred place here on the face of the earth. There Jesus is glorified, man is purified, and the soul is lit up with the light of heaven.

Such is the happiness of a lover of Jesus. Let us pray:  
Hymn 235, vv. 1 and 2. \_\_\_\_\_ MARTIN S. SOMMER

### Pentecost Monday

John 7:33-39

Upon the occasion of the Feast of the Tabernacles (v. 2) Jesus taught the people in the Temple, v. 14, and many of them believed on Him, v. 31. But the enemies sought to take Him, v. 32. To enemies and friends alike Jesus spoke the words of our text—words of warning and invitation.

### **The Call to Become Vessels of the Holy Spirit**

1. *Many are hostile to this gracious call*
2. *Blessed are they who heed this call*

#### **1**

Among the hearers of Christ during the Feast of Tabernacles were people who failed to make a salutary use of the presence of Jesus in their midst. The hostility of the Jews caused Jesus to exclaim: v. 33. The day of grace was fast drawing to a close for the Jews. Only a little while would Jesus be in their midst, offering them God's grace, forgiveness, eternal salvation.

Many in these latter days fail to recognize the day of grace. They despise the Gospel and the Sacraments and therefore cannot become vessels of the Holy Spirit. What a warning to us! Luther, in referring to v. 33, says: "They are terrible words; I do not like to read them. And our best advice is not to think that the Gospel we now have will remain forever. . . . The Word cannot abide long, for ingratitude is too great, thus despising it and being satiated will cause it to disappear, for God cannot always look on." Therefore let us remember the admonition of the Apostle in 2 Cor. 6:2.

The Lord describes the pitiful spiritual confusion of those who failed to redeem their time of grace, v. 34. After the Lord would have withdrawn His visible presence from the earth, the Jews would yearn for the Messiah and seek His help and deliverance. But they would not find Him and thus experience the righteous retribution of God. John 13:33. The Prophet foretold this spiritual famine for Israel. Amos 8:11-14.

Vv. 35, 36. Derisively the Jews refer to Jesus as "this fellow." Sneeringly they ridicule the Lord's statement about seeking Him where He could not be found. In spite of better knowledge they purposely misunderstood the warning of the Lord and stubbornly resisted its appeal. Today, as in the days of Noah, many in unbelief despise the Word and the Sacraments and reject the offer of salvation. May God preserve us from becoming hardened in our hearts! Heb. 3:15.

#### **2**

V. 37. This is the Lord's invitation to His hearers to become vessels of grace filled with the Spirit. In this call He alludes to the ceremonies of the Feast of the Tabernacles observed by the Jews in memory of their entrance into Canaan. "Daily during the festival, at the time of the morning sacrifice, a priest would fill a golden vessel with water at the Pool of Siloam and, together with the wine used for the sacrifice, pour it on the altar in commemoration of the water from the rock in the wilderness and their entry

into the land of springs and water." The Great Hallel was sung: Pss. 113—118.

The rock in the wilderness, Ex. 17:6, out of which water came for the people to drink pointed forward to Christ as St. Paul asserts 1 Cor. 10:4. The Lord's call, v. 37, refers to spiritual thirst, to be satisfied by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost in fulfillment of the prophecy. Is. 12:3. They who experience real spiritual thirst are the weary and heavy laden who are invited to come to the Lord Jesus for spiritual rest and refreshment, pardon and forgiveness. Is. 55:1-3; 58:11; John 4:14.

Those who have thus been drawn to Jesus, are described by the Lord, v. 38, as believers, who by faith have become vessels of grace filled with the Spirit. Having been comforted, they are able to comfort others. 1 Cor. 1:4. They are strengthened with might by the Lord's Spirit in the inner man, that He may dwell in their hearts by faith. Eph. 3:16, 17. As vessels of the Holy Spirit, the believer's life manifests itself by deeds of the Spirit for the benefit of others.

While the Holy Spirit was active already in and through the children of God in the Old Testament, especially through the Prophets who foretold the coming of the Messiah, yet there would be a special manifestation of the work of the Spirit in the hearts of believers after the glorification of Christ through His return to the Father. This occurred on Pentecost, when the Spirit was poured out on the disciples. V. 39.

Living water indeed has flowed from the lips of the believers of the Old Testament and in a greater measure from those of the believers of the New Testament. We think of Moses, David, and Isaiah of the Old Testament and then of the four Evangelists, Stephen, Peter, and Paul of the New Testament—all vessels of the Holy Spirit. We think also of Luther and Walther and many other consecrated pastors and teachers who faithfully preached and taught the Word, the vehicle of the Spirit. Nor will we forget the confessions, prayers, and hymns of the Church—all products of the vessels of the Spirit.

Are we such vessels of grace filled with the Spirit? We still have the fullness of the Gospel, the doctrines of the Scriptures in their entirety and purity. What golden opportunities for pious fathers and mothers to lead their children to the Savior, to teach them to pray, opportunities for all Christians to confess their faith, to warn and comfort their fellow men and to support all endeavors to increase the number of vessels of the Spirit in this world. Jesus says: John 15:26, 27, and we pray: Hymn 224:3. Amen.

H. C. HARTING



## Trinity Sunday

Matt. 3:13-17

Introduction: John the Baptist and his mission, vv. 1-6.

### Astounding Occurrences at the Jordan Where John was Baptizing

1. *A unique Baptism*

2. *A unique revelation*

#### 1

V. 13. Jesus came to John to be baptized. Strange. John preached the Baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, Luke 3:3. It was a Baptism for sinners. And the people who were baptized by John confessed their sins. But to this Baptism comes the incarnate Son of God, who knew no sin, 2 Cor. 5:21, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, Heb. 7:26. Strange, is it not?

V. 14. John considered it strange, even astounding. Among them that were born of women there had not risen a greater than John the Baptist, and yet he was a sinner who confessed: John 1:27. And now this Jesus comes to John to receive the Baptism of repentance! But how could John be so sure that he was not mistaken in the person to whom he denied Baptism? Did he not say, "I knew Him not"? John 1:31. He must have had a strong intimation that this was the Christ, the Son of the living God. Is it possible that his mother should never have told him about what had happened? Luke 1. Besides, his mother and the mother of Jesus were kinswomen, Luke 1:36. Is it possible that they should never have visited, as Luke 1:39, with their sons? And then there was that impressive majesty of Jesus' appearance. But John had not yet received the God-appointed sign which would unmistakably and absolutely assure him, John 1:33.

V. 15. Jesus lets John's statement stand as correct, but replies, v. 15, "It becometh us to fulfill all righteousness" — *you* to do what you have been sent to do, *Me* to do the will of Him that sent Me, to submit to all ordinances of My Father, including Baptism. All righteousness — all requirements of God's holy Law given to men, which they have not kept and cannot keep. Jesus here publicly declared Himself to be our Substitute to fulfill all our obligations to God, not only on this occasion, but throughout His whole life upon earth, in order to provide for us the righteousness with which we can stand before the searching eyes of our God.

Unique? Astounding! Jesus, the spotless Son of God, takes our place, submits to Baptism for the remission of sins, sins which He had not committed, but which were charged to Him, 2 Cor. 5:21, our sins. Now we who are baptized in His name and trust in His merits enjoy the free and full pardon for our iniquities. The

heavens, closed to us because of our sins, are now opened to us, v. 16, and the Holy Ghost makes us His temple, 1 Cor. 3:16. Have we heard and read this so often that it leaves no deep impression on us? Even the angels stand in amazement before this miracle of godliness, 1 Pet. 1:12. How can it leave us so cold?

## 2

Vv. 16, 17. This is Trinity Sunday, when we consider the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. The doctrine of the three persons in the Godhead is clearly set forth in many passages of the Bible. Just to mention a few: Matt. 28:19; John 16:7 b; 2 Cor. 13:14. Also in the Old Testament. Some Jewish rabbis of long ago felt that there must be a singular and deep mystery indicated by the threefold repetitions such as are to be found Num. 6:24-26 and Is. 6:3. We know what this mystery is: the three persons in the Godhead. But here in our text we have the astounding revelation of the three Persons. Whose is the voice coming from heaven? The Father's. The Son is standing at the Jordan, having been baptized and receiving the acclaim of His Father. The Holy Ghost descending in the form of a dove and lighting on Him. Three distinct persons. In confessing the three articles of the Creed we are standing on firm ground.

Yet there are not three Gods, but *one* God, Deut. 6:4; 1 Cor. 8:4; Mark 12:29, 32. Thus there is Trinity in Unity. "In the one Godhead there are three distinct Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, indissolubly one in the same divine essence and equal in power and divine glory and majesty."

This is a doctrine which surpasses all understanding, which has no analogy, and which permits of no adequate illustration. It is a doctrine which is clearly revealed in the Bible and therefore a doctrine that must be accepted by faith, a faith of the heart, which we so clearly and emphatically confess in the Athanasian Creed. (At least parts of it might be read to the congregation from the *Concordia Triglotta*.)

We thank God for the astounding revelation at the Jordan of the three persons in the Godhead, and we sing with conviction, faith, and devotion such hymns as No. 251 or 252. R. NEITZEL

### First Sunday after Trinity

Matt. 19:16-25

The number of individuals and organizations that call themselves religious are legion. Being religious is not enough. God demands more. He demands discipleship in Christ.

### Who Is a Disciple of Jesus Christ?

1. *Not the self-righteous man nor the servant of sin*
2. *But He only who in true faith follows Jesus*

#### 1

A. a. The young man was religious, honorable, earnest, a ruler of the synagog (Luke 18:18), and interested in his soul, v. 16. Yet his questoin revealed a wrong attitude. He thought the performing of some good thing in addition to what he had already heaped up to his credit would insure his salvation. Jesus' answer posits all goodness in God, denies goodness to man, v. 17, and therefore the ability to gain eternal life by his own effort, Ps. 51:5; Rom. 3:10, 12; 9:31-33; *Trigl.* 785 f., 881 f.

b. Since the days of Jesus, millions of hermits, monks, and adherents of all shades of religious beliefs have tried to save themselves by their own efforts. But discipleship in Jesus Christ does not lie in that direction. The voice of Jesus is too insistent, "One thing thou lackest," Mark 10:21.

B. a. Though the young man showed a vital interest in his soul and thought he could carry out some good thing to insure his salvation, his riches proved to be his nemesis, vv. 20 b-22. The commandments of the Second Table seemed easy. But the disposition of his heart became evident when confronted with the First Commandment. Money was his real god and the barrier separating him from the true God, vv. 21, 22; 1 Tim. 6:10; Eccl. 4:7; 5:10; Luke 12:15.

b. Whether rich or poor, too many today within the pale of the Church have a desire to increase their possessions. Money in their eyes means power, prestige, influence, ease, health insurance, security, guarantee against want in old age. Ostensibly religious, their real worship centers around the altar of the Golden Calf and prevents that worshiper from drawing near to God, vv. 23-26; Prov. 14:28; Matt. 13:22; Luke 12:15-21; Discipleship in Jesus cannot be found on this path either.

#### 2

A. Discipleship in Jesus is found only through faith in the atoning blood of the Christ. Jesus tells the ruler, "Come and follow Me!" Hither! To Me! That is a plea to come to Jesus, to accept Him as His personal Savior, to become His disciple. Rom. 10:4, 9; Phil. 3:9; 2 Pet. 1:1. That which is impossible with men is possible with God. God laid the iniquity of the world on Jesus who in His own body bore our sins on the Cross, Is. 53:6; 1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:18-21; Rom. 3:24-26. Discipleship in Jesus

is found by everyone who follows the invitation of Jesus, Matt. 11:28; who believes with Peter, John 6:69; Matt. 16:16; who kneels down with Thomas and says, John 10:28; who worships with Mark, Luke 10:42; who professes with Paul, Rom. 8:38, 39; 2 Tim. 4:7, 8; who testifies with the writer of Hebrews, Heb. 13:8; who exults with John Bowring, Hymn 354, v. 1 (*The Lutheran Hymnal*).

B. Such faith will cause the Christian to follow Jesus in a sanctified life, to follow the example of Him whom we have accepted as our Savior; not in order to boast, v. 20, but to show one's gratitude to Him who died for us, 2 Cor. 5:15; Eph. 5:1-4; Phil 2:1-15. Therefore a believer will use his earthly gifts in spreading the Lord's kingdom. The harvest is plenteous, Matt. 9:37, 38; the disciple of Jesus is ready, Is. 6:8. All over the world God is showing us open doors where we can proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom and make more disciples of Jesus. Our chaplains and many of our service men and women are proving themselves to be real disciples of Christ. We at home have determined on a \$5,000,000 Thankoffering for expansion of the Kingdom at home and abroad. Neither are we unmindful of the obligations of discipleship we owe one another, Col. 3:16-24.

Discipleship in Jesus rests alone on faith in Jesus, Eph. 2:19-22.  
Blessed is every disciple of Jesus!

ALEX W. GUEBERT



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## Miscellanea

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### What Was the Formula of Concord Trying to Say? A Reply to Dr. C. B. Gohdes \*

Dr. Gohdes' article in the October, 1944, issue of the *Lutheran Church Quarterly* concerning the doctrine of the Lord's Supper makes one ask a question in regard to the Formula of Concord. What was this document trying to say? Does it have a message for us in the formulation of a new Lutheran dogmatics?

If this had been Dr. Gohdes' purpose, we might have let it go unchallenged. But the very first and the second sentences that he writes give us some ground for raising this question. The first sentence speaks of articles and tracts in defense of the traditional Lutheran view of the Lord's Supper and indicates that they are of frequent appearance. It would have been very helpful if Dr. Gohdes had listed a few of these writings that we might judge whether the frequent appearance is also a recent appearance. The second sentence speaks of the restiveness which had made itself felt in regard to the traditional formulation of the doctrine of the Holy Sacrament. What evidence does the author give for this? This has certainly not been indicated in meetings of commissions on Lutheran unity or in seminars held from time to time throughout the country. In such gatherings Lutherans are apparently still laboring on the peripheral problem of verbal inspiration!

The real point of his approach is doubtless the assertion that the Formula of Concord is so argumentatively "implemented as to express the idea of consubstantiation and to connote the very Capernaite eating and drinking which it reprobates." Dr. Gohdes might charge almost all of the Lutheran Confessions with the same charge of *consubstantiation* if he were so minded to keep company with the Webster of the dictionary! For they all say about the same thing.

On the other hand, Dr. Gohdes stresses that he accepts with all his heart the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper. It might then be implied that his conception of the Lord's Supper is stated in his own words which read as follows: "Christ is present in the Holy Supper, as He is present in the Word and Baptism, and received savingly in faith, so that the Sacrament of the Altar becomes the means whereby the Kingdom is covenanted to the disciples; that is, to all poor sinners who grasp Him as the pardoner and the healer of sin: there is the essence of the Sacrament."

Many years ago Dr. Philip Shaff described the conception of the Lord's Supper as held by Philip Melancthon, who "represented the idea of a vital union and communion with the person of Christ as the one and only essential thing in the sacred ordinance." I have put this down that Dr. Shaff's estimate of Melancthon's view might be compared

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\* This article, written by the Rev. Benjamin Lotz of Bethlehem, Pa., appeared in the January, 1945, issue of *The Lutheran Church Quarterly* and is here reprinted with the permission of the latter journal.



with that apparently held by Dr. Gohdes. It might further illuminate the subject to quote a few words from the Formula of Concord. "Others, however, are subtle Sacramentarians, and the most injurious of all, who partly speak very speciously in our own words, and pretend that they also believe a true presence of the true, essential, living body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper, however, that this occurs spiritually through faith. . . . For with them the word *spiritually* means nothing else than the Spirit of Christ or the power of the absent body of Christ and His merit, which is present; but the body of Christ is in no mode or way present, except only above in the highest heaven, to which we should elevate ourselves in heaven by the thoughts of our faith, etc."

It is not possible in a brief note to discuss in any detail Dr. Gohdes' article. Neither is it possible to examine his assertion whether the Scriptural quotations in the Formula of Concord are applicable or whether the process of reason is relevant (p. 341). Much of this can be passed over if the important thing is considered. For the historian the first and important task is to inquire how the document arose, and on the basis of this knowledge he ought to judge it. In a confession of faith, he ought to seek out what spiritual values its formulators were trying to conserve, even if they perhaps applied Scriptural passages which would not be relevant for the purpose or used terms that could not be used today. Perhaps one of these was the *oral reception of the body and blood of Christ!*

Those who formulated this Confession wanted to make it perfectly clear that in the Holy Supper, Christ came to men. They did not come to Him. In so doing, they were true to the Lutheran Confessions which had gone before. They had rejected not only the Roman doctrine of the Mass but the philosophy which was necessary to support it with any claims of reason. They would not have cared whether men called their reasoning *inconclusive* and derided them for holding "two mutually exclusive concepts." On the other hand, they wanted to assert with all of the power within them that Christ comes to the impious, to the scoffer, to the hypocrite, and to the unbeliever in the Sacrament even "where there is no vital union or communion" possible.

For the Formula of Concord wanted to make certain this fact that, at the reception of the elements, Christ is not absent from them. And any modern doctrine of the Holy Supper must safeguard this truth even if it must reject the reasoning, the terminology, and the exegesis of our Lutheran fathers. It might be asserted that after four hundred (or less) years, the appeal that Dr. Gohdes makes to a conjectural Aramaic text might seem just as strange to those who follow in our train. But one seeks in vain in the article for a sympathetic consideration of what the Formula of Concord is trying to say!

Perhaps a reformulation of the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper ought to start with a new Christology. For the same objections raised against the Real Presence can and have been raised against the Incarnation of the Godhead in human nature. And the same objections can and have been raised against the ascended and regnant Lord being present in the Holy Sacrament. But for Luther heaven was nothing

local or spatial, and the Ascension of our Lord meant that He was no longer bound by the limitations of time and space as in the days of His flesh. In this, Luther anticipated the great philosopher Kant. It is true that the Formula of Concord is less reticent than we to speak of that which is in the final analysis ineffable. But the Formula of Concord arose in the days of cruel and bitter controversy when men are forced to stress definition where it would be better to bow in mystery and faith.

### Lutheran Unity

(From an essay delivered at the Free Conference in Madras, October 2 and 3, 1944, by the Rev. M. L. Kretzmann, Missouri Synod Missionary at Ambur, India.)

When representative Lutherans of South India met in Madras last fall, our brother Missionary M. L. Kretzmann delivered an excellent paper on the principles that would have to be considered if a God-pleasing union of the various Lutheran bodies represented was to be formed. We regret that we cannot well print the whole essay, but we submit here an important section. Perhaps at a later date another section of it can be printed. In his prefatory remarks the essayist stressed the proper motives with which the whole project was to be approached. He pointed out two legitimate reasons for forming a united front, "that we should unite so that we can do more work" and, secondly, "that we should be able through such an organization to do not only more work, but also better work." Then he began the discussion of principles. He stressed that unity of doctrine was required. The section that has to do with this thought we herewith submit.

1. The union must be a real unity, based on unity of doctrine and practice.

This is not a red herring introduced into these discussions for the purpose of distracting and diverting your attention. I believe that the acceptance of this principle alone can give us a reasonable assurance of a sound organization based on Scriptural principles. Anything less than this would be only an admission of spiritual paucity and would carry within it its own promise of decay.

The question may be asked whether the assumption of differences in doctrine and practice is not unwarranted in a group of Lutherans, all of whom officially accept the historical Confessions of the Lutheran Church. If such an assumption should prove to be unfounded in fact, it would be cause for sincere rejoicing. But the relation of the various bodies to each other in the past, as well as the present practices of some, clearly indicate that there is ample room for open and sincere discussion of our present stand in relation to those Confessions. The first missionaries of the Missouri Synod's work in India left a Lutheran group which is now part of the Federation because of a tendency to laxness in discipline of those holding false views on the inspiration of Scripture. Another branch of the Lutheran Church in India is in Communion fellowship with a non-Lutheran group. The three American Lutheran Church groups represented in India are at present carrying on negotiations for unity in America but have not yet reached full agreement.

I believe that we have a priceless gift from God in our common confessional basis and that we should never lose sight of nor minimize the measure of unity which already exists among us. But this should make us all the more eager to assure ourselves that this unity is one of fact and not mere historical connection. We would be less than completely honest if we did not discuss frankly and openly the points on which we differ and, God willing, arrive at a real unity of profession and practice.

This has been the historical position of the Lutheran Church. The very existence of that Church is proof of her insistence upon a non-compromising attitude toward the truths of Scripture. She was founded as a protest against the doctrinal decline of the organized Church of the Middle Ages. It was this attitude of tenaciously holding fast to the truth and defending it against all errors which found expression in the Book of Concord: "From this our explanation . . . everyone may clearly infer that we have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquillity, and unity. . . . But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity, according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth is surrendered, no room is given the least error."

Luther realized that he was disturbing the peace of the Church. He was forcibly reminded of this by dignitaries and officials of the State and Church. Yet for the Word of God he would cause contention and discord to arise. He was aware that a peace at any price, a united front at any price policy, would bring terrible consequences in its wake. A Church which endeavored to restore quiet by setting aside the Word of God would at the last be overwhelmed by a deluge of intolerable evils. To him nothing mattered when the Word of God was at stake.

We have much to be thankful for in the fact that there has been a definite trend toward confessionalism in the Lutheran Church in America, in which so many of us have our roots, in the past century. Where there was at one time confessional indifference and indiscriminate altar and pulpit fellowship with Reformed pastors and churches of varying degrees of unorthodoxy, we now find a growing concern for purity of doctrine and faithful adherence to Scriptural principles in practice. We would lose much if through hasty desire for a union we would sacrifice this historical principle of Lutheranism.

Let us understand that it is unity of faith alone which can bring about a unity which is more than "a fellowship of uncongenial minds," as other types of union have been described. It has been argued that getting together is the main thing and that all else will follow. There is a certain getting together, a co-operation in externals which is outside of the confessional concept, which is both desirable and necessary. But to use this getting together as an approach to union or as a substitute for real unity is not right. There is real danger that, when we get together merely on the basis of activities, the result will be an organization large in size and small in spiritual power, and there may

be room for the justifiable charge that we "have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof." Neither is it enough to say that love alone is a sufficient basis for union. The *Lutheran* emphasized this when it said: "Before churches and sects can be united, they must find a common authority and bow before it. . . . No real unity is possible on the basis of Christian love. Get men together on a common basis of faith, and Christian love will have something to feed upon."

An attitude of indifference to unity of faith and doctrine is against the concept of the Church. The Church, the *ecclesia*, is a body which is called out of the world for the express purpose of bearing witness to certain specific facts taught by Holy Scriptures, and any organization which contains those who deny or ignore those facts or the Scriptures which teach them must be inherently unsound. The charge has been made against the Lutheran Church that it perpetuates the divisions of Christendom through its uncompromising attitude. But this is in the nature of the Lutheran Church. She realizes that true, ideal Christian fellowship must be real fellowship based on the truth. God has made the Church the steward of the saving Gospel, and she must ever be aware of the great responsibilities of that stewardship. Dr. M. Loy, in writing on the Augsburg Confession, has aptly said: "We Lutherans could get along very nicely with all the world and with all the churches if we would only stop pressing the exclusive claims of the Bible and the way of salvation which it teaches and quit—being Lutherans."

If we want, and there can be no doubt that we do, a powerful church organization in the best sense of the term, then we must adhere to this Scriptural principle that unity of faith and doctrine is a prerequisite of union. There is tremendous power in honest convictions. Conviction based on the truth constitutes one of the richest assets of the Church. There are unions which seemed to be based on a least common denominator. The greatest evil resulting from a union of compromise is the loss of spiritual integrity which is always involved when error is consciously given a place side by side with truth.

The way to real unity is not easy. It requires much expenditure of time and labor, much intellectual and spiritual struggle. There is no short cut, and we should not give room to the temptation to seek one. As long ago as 1868 Dr. Walther said: "Patience, gentleness, mutual fraternal esteem, frank exchange of the convictions of each side, close study of Scripture, and constant prayer will be the necessary weapons for those who wish to attain the agreement for which we long and to frustrate the schemes of the devil." It is not out of place to say that in our discussions toward unity we must bar the spirit of suspicion, uncharitable judgments, quick-tempered impatience, and, particularly, all self-conceit and self-exaltation.

On what basis can we get together, what is needed for unity in doctrine? I am not able to improve on two quotations which I found bearing on this subject.

The first is from the *Living Church* (March 14, 1943): "A man can be won over for the truth more easily if he believes that his teachings are based—and must be based—on the Holy Scriptures than if he

cares little for what Scripture states. For in the former case the power of Scripture has a chance to work on him. Where two parties are one in their love of the truth, one in their conviction that Holy Scripture is inviolable, and one party misapprehends some of the truth, there is still good prospect for their becoming one in doctrine. Devotion to the truth of Scripture is the indispensable prerequisite for the full apprehension of the truth."

The second is from *The American Lutheran*, December, 1942: "It is of utmost importance for the Church ever to remember that the Scriptures alone are the God-given norm and rule of faith and life. While a given historical setting makes it advisable to set forth controverted elements of Biblical truth in special confessional statements, these documents must never be substituted for the Scriptures themselves. We believe that the teachings of the Bible have been correctly set forth in the historical confessional writings of the Lutheran Church and that whoever accepts the Lutheran Confessions as the true and correct exposition of Bible truth deserves to be called a Lutheran. Biblical Christianity and sound Lutheranism we believe are identical."

I believe, then, that the further study of present-day problems as they affect our relations with each other must be based on the proposition that the sacred Scriptures themselves and the historical confessional writings of the Lutheran Church are a sufficient basis for the establishment of a God-pleasing doctrinal unity among the various Lutheran groups in India.

It may be countered that we are speaking chiefly now of a union of national churches and that we should not impose on them the confessional basis of a Church of another age and land. But it is not a denationalization of the Indian Church nor a stultifying of its spiritual life to ask of it that, if it wishes to be Lutheran, it accept the Confessions of the Lutheran Church. I believe that the Confessions deal with the essence, the material of Christianity, not with its form. In the former there can be no latitude if we are true to our call to preach the Gospel; in the latter, the form, the national Church may adopt whatever is suited to its temperament, environment, and national genius.

Let us hold fast this concept of true unity and, though the road be long and hard, pray God to give us the wisdom, patience, and strength to labor for a true union.





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## Theological Observer

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### SUMMER SCHOOL FOR PASTORS AT SEWARD, JUNE 25 TO JULY 13

Concordia Teachers College of Seward, Nebraska, this summer will again conduct a summer school for pastors, patterned after its previous successful ventures in this field. This year the staff of regular instructors will be augmented by specialists in various fields from several areas of our Church, and the entire school for pastors will be operated under the auspices of the extension division of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

#### The Courses of Instruction

*The Present Status of Union Endeavors.* With the collaboration and participation of Synod's Committee on Doctrinal Unity, Concordia Teachers College this summer will conduct an intensive study in this problem so vital in the Lutheran Church of America. The syllabus and study outline is being prepared by Dr. Wm. Arndt, Chairman of the Committee. In addition, the staff will include: Dr. J. H. C. Fritz, member of the Committee, Pastor F. Brunn, member of the Committee, Pastor A. H. Grumm, of the North Dakota-Montana District. The seminar technique will be employed, with President A. O. Fuerbringer acting as arbiter. One credit hour.

*New Testament Word Pictures.* A practical study in the Greek Testament. Words, word families, concepts, synonyms and antonyms will be studied. Examples: "justify," "grace," "faith," "God," "church," "prophet," "mercy seat," "ransom," "serve," and their cognates. The course is divided into three units, of which unit B, The New Testament Vocabulary Derived from Judaism, will be offered during the summer of 1945. One credit hour. Professor Wolbrecht.

*Readings in the Greek New Testament.* Selected chapters, with attention to grammatical review and linguistic problems of the *Koine*. Review, with accelerating reading. One credit hour. President Fuerbringer.

*Administration of Religious Education.* This course is divided into three units. The first deals with the philosophy and theory of education and the relation of these to the educational work of the Church. The second section deals with the organizational and administrative aspects of various educational agencies in the average congregation. This section will be timed to coincide with the Pastors' Summer Session. The third part will be devoted to the development of objectives, curricula, and teaching materials for the separate units. This work will be individualized to meet special interests and needs. Three credit hours (one for middle period). Dr. Bickel.

*Liturgics.* The nature and purpose of public worship, the confessional aspect of liturgics, the historical development of the Common Service and the musical aesthetics on its execution. Practical emphasis. Two credit hours. Professor Reuter.

In addition, pastors may register for one credit hour in the full summer session courses entitled: Lutheran Church in America and Biblical Literature. The privilege is also extended, within practical time limits, of auditing other courses in progress. The normal load for the period is three credit hours. Credits earned are transferable as graduate credit to Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

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PRESIDENT A. O. FUEBRINGER

Concordia Teachers College, Seward, Nebraska

**"The Constant Delays and Discussions of Missouri."**—What is true in the charge contained in the above words found in a letter published in the *Lutheran* of February 28, 1945 (U. L. C. A.)? The church council of St. Paul's Lutheran Church (U. L. C. A.), Mount Vernon, N. Y., of which the Rev. Wilfried Tappert is the pastor, adopted a resolution declaring that it "invites for selective altar and pulpit fellowship those Lutheran pastors and congregations, no matter to which Lutheran Synod they may belong, who are one with us in the confession of the same Lord and seek salvation according to the same faith; pledging at the same time to restrict our fellowship solely to such, to the best of our knowledge and ability." In a previous sentence the church council had affirmed its loyalty to the pure Word of God "as the Church confesses it in the Book of Concord." The pastor, in publishing these resolutions, states, "Since other congregations in the metropolitan area of New York have been practicing selective altar and pulpit fellowship, in protest against the constant delays and discussions of Missouri and as a practical step toward church unity, it may be appropriate to publish the above."

Missouri, we see, is charged with causing constant delays and discussions. Perhaps we shall be permitted to look first at the second one of these two items. Yes, Missouri has insisted on discussions. Is there anything wrong with that? When ministers meet in their conferences, they have discussions. What do they discuss? If their conferences are to be fruitful, they have to discuss doctrine, the very things on which the life of the Church depends. When the congregation meets for worship, there is discussion by the pastor of the great truths that God has revealed to us. We are disgusted and grieved if sermons are preached in which there is no discussion of Christian doctrine. Certainly, discussions by themselves are not an evil—they are necessary for the healthy development, yes, for the very existence of the Church. If there is not to be stagnation, God's revealed teachings have to be looked at, considered, unfolded, compared, and applied.

It may be held that the nature of the discussions on which Missouri at present is insisting is reprehensible. What is that nature? A joint

committee of the A.L.C. and the Missouri Synod has drawn up the so-called Doctrinal Affirmation, which contains the truths that in the opinion of the framers should be given public and joint expression at the present time. Let these truths be examined! They will be found to be the great teachings contained in the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. Most of them are spoken of in the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism. They are the very things a Lutheran rejoices in, they are the treasures of the Church, its pearls and diamonds. Are we tired of considering them? Such a thing should not be the case with respect to any Lutheran. We visit a friend. He shows us his garden adorned with roses and pansies. We have seen roses and pansies before. But how we are thrilled when we are shown these lovely creations of God's wisdom and kindness in a new setting. Shall we not rejoice when we again look at the great truths on which our salvation depends? It ought to be clear that discussions *per se* cannot be objected to.

It may be that the discussions are not always carried on in the right way. Missourians, sad to say, are not angelic beings, they have their faults and weaknesses, and it may be that these become quite evident now and then when conferences on doctrine are held. On the other side of the fence weaknesses are observed, too. To recur to our simile of the flower beds—on this earth we find weeds becoming now and then very disturbing and obnoxious. We have to fight them. But no one of us is so foolish as to destroy the flowers because weeds insist on springing up about them. If weaknesses and among them at times a somewhat contentious spirit manifest themselves in these discussions, let us with a gentle hand restrain such manifestations, but let not the great objective itself be obscured to us on account of these unpleasant features.

And Missouri is accused of causing delays. The critics must bear in mind that Missouri is a conservative body. Its members have all been taught that one of the qualities a Christian, and every Christian, should exhibit is loyalty to God's Word. On that point great emphasis has always been placed. For that reason Missouri moves slowly in approaching other church bodies. It desires to travel a safe road, a road which will not commit it to the endorsement of anything that is contrary to the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. The aim that is striven for is good and noble. It may be that off and on delays enter in that are irksome to those who are eager to establish fellowship with us. Perhaps now and then the same ground is gone over too frequently, and the same truths are repeated again and again in a way that nerves become frayed. Here again we say, Let imperfections be borne with. We all have our weaknesses. If Missourians incline too much in one direction, then let it not be forgotten that on the other side there are many who incline too much in the opposite direction. When divine truths are involved, we certainly cannot be too careful. Bearing this in mind, it seems to us Missouri ought not to be chided for moving slowly, but rather to be commended.

A.

**Free Conferences of the National Lutheran Council.**—The National Lutheran Council held its reorganization meeting in New York Jan. 23—26. "The new constitution," says the report in *The Lutheran*, "was adopted without dissent." We are especially interested in the section that has to do with "free conferences" which, when the reorganization of the Council was first talked about, loomed as a promising factor. What is actually developing strikes us as rather futile. The report states, "Initial approval was given to detailed plans for the first of the triennial 'free conferences' of Lutherans for which provision is made in the new constitution. In the light of recent ODT directives regarding gatherings requiring transportation and hotel facilities, the executive director and the president were constituted a committee to confer with Government authorities regarding the feasibility of planning the gathering for next November. The free conference, if held, will meet in Columbus, Ohio, and will consist of 315 clerical and lay delegates elected on a proportionate basis from the Council bodies. Seminar studies will cover either 'Church and State' or 'The Lutheran Church and the Community.'"

From the above it appears that these conferences will not be free conferences to which all Lutherans of the United States will be invited, but merely conferences for the membership of the National Lutheran Council. Why these meetings should be called "free conferences" is a mystery to us. There is another aspect which we find still more disappointing. We had hoped that these free conferences would become occasions where Lutherans of America would meet to discuss the burning doctrinal and practical issues which now agitate the Lutheran Church of our country, such as the inerrancy of the Scriptures, confessional loyalty, the lodge evil, and unionism. Instead of these topics, something lying outside the field of controversy, important, it is true, and requiring scholarly thought and research, but not pertaining to the unification of Lutheranism, will occupy that rather large body which will constitute the official membership of the conference. What a blessing it would be if these men, coming from various sections of the Lutheran Church, thoroughly considered the points of doctrine which today call for clarification and emphasis so that the divided house may become united. It seems that unity of doctrine is presupposed, though everybody knows that it is far from being a reality. A.

**Servicemen's Rights and Benefits.**—This is the title of House Document No. 682 (78th Congress, 2d Session; Government Printing Office, Washington), "a handy guide for veterans of the armed forces and their dependents," the purpose of which is "to give the veterans a correct picture of the rights and benefits available to them and their dependents." As stated in the foreword, the document does not attempt to answer all the questions anyone could ask, but it gives the high spots and tells the reader where the answers can be found. We mention it here because of the importance of the issues which it treats. J. T. M.

**The Christian Witness of a British General.**—Lieut.-Gen. Sir William G. S. Dobbie, G. C. M. G., K. C. B., D. S. O., is the British officer who was called upon to defend the island of Malta at a time when this im-

portant Mediterranean fortress was the hardest-hit spot in English possession and, in addition, the most desired by the German military. The fortress withstood all attacks, and General Dobbie, now delivering lectures in the United States before Christian audiences, tells them what enabled him and his men to hold out under the almost unbearable bombing. His personal trust in God, his daily study of Scripture, his ardent prayer life, these and other spiritual values of which he speaks, were the never-failing sources of his daily strength and refreshment. In the *Sunday School Times* (February 24, March 3, and March 10, 1945) he relates his personal Christian convictions in three articles: *The Unchanging God; Man's Unchanging Need; The Unchanging Foundation*. The honest testimony of this sincere believer in Christ is worth noting at this time, when there is so much indifferentism, laxity, and surrender of fundamental moral principles. Is. 53:12 is being wondrously fulfilled even today.

J. T. M.

**Christianity in Japan.** — *The Living Church* (March 18, 1945) quotes from the *Religious News Service* "an inside view of Christianity in Japan," as it was given in Chungking by a Korean theological student who was forced to volunteer for the Japanese army last year, served a few months, and then escaped one night last July from a Central China camp, making his way to Chungking, seat of the Korean provisional government. As stated in the report, Christianity in Japan is a much weaker force today than it was in 1941. Christian membership has fallen off as much as two thirds, and church attendance is about a fifth of the prewar average. The 28-year-old student, who was in his third year in theology at the Nippon Theological College in Tokyo, named three reasons for the waning of Christian influence in Japan. For one thing, the new Japan Christian Association, which was inspired by the government to "unite" the churches, spends so much effort flattering the state and its wishes that it is no longer a spiritual force and many real Christians stay away from church to protest. Second, it is no longer popular to be a Christian. The Christian faith carries a stigma of being foreign, and the nationalist enthusiasm has weaned away persons of weak faith. Third, people are too busy to go to church. Sunday is a workday, and while Christians in Japan may have time off for attending services, few take it. Pastors also must perform their national labor service. Christians also have been a nucleus of criticism against the state, as the Korean student reported. Kagawa, who had been doing social work since 1941, was thrown into jail in October, 1943, for his generally liberal social criticism and his opposition to the war. Eighty-three leaders of the Holiness Church are in jail, and also many Seventh-Day Adventists. Both these sects remained highly critical of the government and refused to compromise an inch of their faith. Both refused to enter the union of all Christian bodies in Japan, and both have been disbanded. Their leaders have been jailed and their publications confiscated. Their second-advent and millenarian tenets aroused government hostility because they defied the immortal traditions of the Mikado. Roman Catholics have shown the least decline of the Christian churches in Japan. According to the student, the celebrated plan of



union, which was set up for all Japanese Christian churches in 1940 and 1941, has proved itself a failure. It has weakened Christian influence, and instead of unifying the churches, it has really served to atomize them. The picture today, according to his report, is one of individual churches and individual pastors running things for themselves. But, after all, there is hope for a revival of Christianity in Japan and Korea after the war; only it is conditioned on the defeat of Japan and the independence of Korea. The report of the Korean student is highly interesting, and from all that one can judge it is true. The miracle is that after all that has happened in Japan, there still are Christians daring to profess their faith. J. T. M.

**Missions in the Polar North.**—*The Calvin Forum* (March, 1945), under this title, calls attention to a difficult, yet promising and necessary mission field in Eskimo land, which includes East Greenland, West Greenland, the Northern rocky shores of Canada, the innumerable islands clustered near the North Pole, and Northern Alaska, a part of which is now being evangelized only by Roman Catholic missionaries. If Calvinists are asked to interest themselves in this mission, Lutherans have all the more reason to do so, since Lutheran Hans Egede ("the Apostle of Greenland"; d. 1758) was the first Christian minister to work successfully among the Eskimos. As the writer in the *Calvin Forum* points out, the mission is difficult not only because of the bleak country of the Eskimos and their widely scattered tribes, but also because they usually show little concern for the future. Just because of the seriousness of their life and the many dangers of their existence they take a fatalistic attitude toward it, spending their days with a levity which causes them to take no thought for the soul. In addition, their view of God makes it extremely hard for them to understand the Christian emphasis on the doctrine of God. Their great, outstanding supernatural power is *Sila*, which means the universe, the weather, and wisdom or intelligence. In a religious sense, *Sila* denotes a power which can be invoked, a power personified in *Silap Inua*, the One Possessing Power. While the Eskimo has no specific doctrine of a creative God, *Sila* is to him the Sustainer, healing him and guarding him against the ill will of others. In his eschatology there is no such thing as a hell. The soul goes either to the underworld or the overworld, the underworld being the more desirable of the two, it being a land of sunshine, beautiful birds, and good things. His religious leaders are little more than magicians, who are in constant touch with the spirits and merely function as medicine men. Fear dominates his whole life—fear of the sea, of famine, of death, of the spirits. This fear exists in spite of the fact that the Eskimo, as said before, generally appears as a "rollicking, fun-loving boy." To rid himself of his fear, he grasps at the straws of charms, superstitions, taboos, and magic. Morally the Eskimo is a pathetic figure. Adultery is flagrant, it being practiced by all. Divorce is most common among the Eskimo tribes. The Eskimo simply cannot understand why Christians favor monogamy. And yet, living in the darkness of deepest heathendom and ignorance, the Eskimo is by nature hospitable and friendly and has a warm dis-

position, a guest being always welcome in his igloo. He is always willing to share with the stranger his little store of seal blubber, halibut, or reindeer. His language is difficult, for he has the puzzling custom of hanging word upon word with no break between noun, verb, adjective, or any other part of speech. But the language can be learned, and the other difficulties can be overcome, as the writer says, in closing his interesting article; and what is more: "The real encouragement for the missionary lies not in the temperament of the heathen nor in any natural or human condition, but in the assurance that the missionary is doing the will of God, and that His blessing will follow. God is not known to revoke His Word."

J. T. M.

**The Church's Task in the Postwar World.**—Among the almost countless discussions which occupy themselves with this theme, one has been published in the *Christian Century* which consists in a report of a meeting held by servicemen under the leadership of a chaplain in New Guinea. The report is well written, and because it reflects the opinions of many young people in America, we here reprint it:

"The people in our Protestant churches are lined up automatically in their political decisions against the poor and the industrial workers. And one discovers very little searching of heart among them about this situation." This was the conclusion reached by a group of servicemen at this South Pacific base who had met with the post chaplain, L. W. Hawley, in the chapel. The men in the discussion group, called the Christian Service Fellowship, represented a cross section of American churches from villages, towns, and cities. Their views indicate one trend in the thought of the service men and women who will some day return to their homeland. In opening the discussion, the leader suggested that behind the question, What shall we expect of the churches in the postwar world? lies the assumption that the postwar world is going to be a different world. We have heard no one using the slogan "Back to normalcy," he said. People do not want to go back to 1933 or to 1939. It is good that the nation is looking ahead, because we live in a world that moves forward. To face a changing world is not new for the Church. Service men and women are going to expect the churches to meet the changing needs of people in this new world.

It was agreed that as never before people are in need of something that will give meaning and purpose to their lives. Members of the Fellowship think that to meet this spiritual need the Church must find new ways to bring the life of Jesus close to the lives of people today. It was also said that people will want material security. The group felt that the Church has a responsibility to be a part of movements which will bring people a better life materially. It was stated that the Church should be concerned with the right of every man to have a job from which he can derive adequate support for his family. That people should live in poor housing was thought to be a matter of injustice. 'The existence of such conditions makes talk of equality a mockery.' The Church should help bring about legislation to raise living standards. Members of the group agreed that the educational standards of our nation should be raised and that the Church should take even more

interest in this problem than it has done in the past. It was recognized that the war has interfered with the educational plans of many young men.

Considerable discussion centered around the problem of race relations and the Church. One member said, "There are those among us who would spread ignorant prejudices and hatred for minority groups. Some of our people, unable to see the solution to many problems of the nation, turn upon those of Hebrew faith and upon the Negroes, persecuting them." Some felt that the solution of racial problems will be found when individual church people become thoroughly Christian in their living. Others felt that individuals are powerless to act effectively in the face of the tremendous forces of hatred that have been let loose. They hold that organized steps should be taken by the churches to combat these forces and to bring about equality of opportunity for all peoples. The members of the Fellowship were concerned over the tendency of people between the ages of 18 and 30 to lose interest in the Church. It was agreed that the Church needs these young people. Note was made of the contrast between this statement on the need of the Church and the previous statements on the needs the Church should meet. Must young people come to the rescue of a decadent Church in its need? It was suggested that the Church will not keep the interest of young people until it gives them constructive work to do.

Following the meeting (so the report continues) members stayed to talk it over. During this informal period this question was asked of the discussion leader: "Why has it been that in the past the Church has often stood out against movements that would better the conditions of the common people?" The Church has taken sides with the well to do, the landowners, rather than supporting the demands of the common people for justice and equality. "Martin Luther's unwillingness to support the peasants, who had eagerly followed his leadership in the hope that respect for the individual would mean more equal property rights," was cited as an instance. The questioner also pointed out that Christian forces opposed the revolutions of France and Russia. "The churches have either opposed the democratic forces in Spain or have simply remained aloof." May we expect that the attitude of the churches in the postwar world will be different?

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So ends the report written by Pfc. A. M. Karr. We have reprinted it because it clearly states the opinion held in wide circles that the Church will have to take an aggressive attitude in the political and social field and make one of its objectives the triumph of righteousness and fairness in the class struggles that are going on. As one reads reports like this one, one arrives at the conclusion that much loose talk is indulged in. Do the people who tell the Church what to do realize who the Church is—that they themselves, if they are church members, belong to it? They often speak as if the Church were a corporation or organization which exists outside of human society and should be induced to take an interest in the latter. Besides, these critics do not realize that some of the things which they would like to see the Church introduce or

champion are highly controversial. Take suggestions looking to the solution of the race question, for instance. If the Church is to solve this knotty problem, what is it to advocate? Its members are themselves divided on the best course to take. Some of its wise and consecrated men urge this, others of the membership, equally wise and consecrated, urge that. Such being the case, how can the Church effect a solution? Again, critics forget that the Church's one great task is to preach God's revelation, especially the message which is at the center, the Word of the Cross of Christ. Where matters are covered by divine revelation, the Church can speak with authority. Let it do so. It probably has not laid enough stress on the principles of fair dealing and of brotherly love inculcated in the Scriptures. The Church's main contribution to the solution of social problems never will be the stressing of certain principles of conduct, but the changing of men from selfish beings to loving, considerate, helpful neighbors; and that change can be effected only by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In reading the report, one is struck by the absolutely this-worldly view which seems to lie at the basis of the utterances. That there is an eternity ahead of us and that our chief concern must be to be placed at the divine Judge's right when the final verdict will be rendered, is not mentioned at all. In other words, the viewpoint is altogether that of the social gospel. One regrets to see that with all the striving for fairness, good old Martin Luther is treated very unfairly. That he did his very best to obtain justice for the oppressed peasants and sternly rebuked the feudal lords and that only at last, when the peasants had turned into bestial marauders, he urged the princes to take up arms against them, is simply ignored. Probably the person who was responsible for the reference to Luther had never heard any but a one-sided presentation of what actually took place.

A.

**Baptists and Infant Baptism.**— Under the heading *When is a Baptist a Baptist?* A. C. Archibald in *The Watchman-Examiner* (March 1, 1945) ventures a brief statement of the Baptist faith "in view of misinterpretations." This includes also a testimony against infant baptism, of which he writes: "The basic fundamental of all our fundamentals as Baptists has never been better stated than by Dr. E. Y. Mullins, late president of Louisville Seminary, when he said: 'The fundamental principle of the Baptist faith, out of which all our other beliefs grow, is the competency of the soul of man in matters religious.' Every soul of man is competent of dealing directly with God in matters religious." As interfering with this principle, the writer condemns not only Romanism—with its saintly intermediaries, priesthood, ordinances, or ritual—but also all Protestant churches which adhere to infant baptism or the episcopacy, for they also come short of the New Testament principle of the competency of the soul. He writes: "One has well said: 'These bodies in fact represent a dual Christianity.' They attempt to combine the Romish principle of incompetency with the opposite principle of competency. In insisting upon salvation by faith alone they recognize with us the principle of competency. But in retaining infant baptism or the episcopacy they introduce the opposite view. Infant baptism takes

away from the child its privilege of individual initiative in salvation and lodges in the hands of parents or sponsors the impossible task of performing an act of religious obedience, obedience for another.' No intelligible view of the status of baptized infants in the church can possibly be set forth which does not contradict the doctrine of salvation by faith only, which is also held by these same churches. The reason is that in the one case the competency of the soul in matters religious is affirmed—that is, in salvation by faith only—and in the other competency is denied—that is, in infant baptism and parental sponsorship. Because they unqualifiedly accept the Scriptures as their authority, Baptists hold that the church of Christ consists of those, and those only, who have been baptized upon profession of faith. They find no warrant expressed or implied in the New Testament for the baptism of infants. There is confessedly no command to baptize infants, and no single example in all Scripture. But more than this, Baptists hold that the baptism of any but believers is contrary to the whole spirit of Christianity, and that it totally subverts the principle upon which the church was founded. They [that is, Pedobaptists] pronounce, on the one hand, with an emphasis equal to our own, the doctrine of salvation by faith alone, and then they proceed to baptize infants who can exercise no faith, all the while knowing that it is a relic of Romanism. Of all religious bodies rising in days subsequent to the Reformation, the Baptists stood alone in shaking loose from this unscriptural and divisive practice." There is no need to point out here the writer's gross misinterpretation of the Biblical doctrine of infant baptism, since all he has stated has been refuted time and again by Lutheran theologians. But let us bear in mind that if the doctrine of infant baptism is so severely attacked in periodicals intended for lay readers, it remains our duty to instruct our people thoroughly regarding the scripturalness of the Lutheran doctrine of infant baptism. Baptism is not Law, as the writer would have it, but Gospel, through which the Holy Ghost works the very faith in the infant by which it is regenerated and renewed. In passing, it may be said that the writer's whole way of speaking of the soul's competency to deal directly with God in matters religious is based upon Arminian premises, not to mention his utter rejection of the means of grace.

J. T. M.

**U. S. Troops' Mental Age.**—Under this caption *The Watchman-Examiner* of February 8, 1945, has the following item: "In seeking a reason for the senseless murder by an American soldier of Sir Eric Teickman, British diplomat, Army psychiatrists referred to the murderer as a 'mentally defective homicidal degenerate.' Their spokesman, Major L. Alexander, made an interesting disclosure at the trial. He stated that the average mental age of those who fought in World War I was twelve years. American soldiers in this war have a mental age of between thirteen and fourteen. There is something woefully lacking in such generalizations. It borders on the ridiculous. While psychiatry is rendering help in diagnosing some human problems, the trend is toward assuming too much. The man would have to be omnipresent as well as omniscient to estimate the mental age of this generation of soldiers.



We wonder what is the age of the psychiatrist group? Then, too, we think the classification is insulting to some twelve- and fourteen-year-old youngsters we have heard of. Samuel was called of God to be prophet in Israel when he was about twelve. The little maid in Naaman's household was the diplomat of heaven. Jesus at twelve confounded the doctors in the Temple. Being twelve years of age is a proud achievement to a growing child. Reaching nine years is an infant's hopeful dream. Have the psychiatrists never heard of sin? Apologists for sin may think of the human spirit in mathematical age groups. They have not reached the vestibule of truth or wisdom, however, by doing so. It is sin which makes murderers, liars, thieves, and fools out of human beings, not their age." T. L.

**Episcopal Interpretations.**—In the Dec. 10, 1944, issue of *The Living Church*, an influential organ of the Episcopal Church, we read the following interpretations in the "Question Box," which clearly indicate the Romanistic and modernistic trend which is gaining the ascendancy in this Church.

"What is meant by the words 'There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few chosen'?"

"The invitation had been for everybody; only a few obtained their place among the chosen by accepting it. Even some of these show themselves later on, by their disrespectful manners, to be not of the body of the King's friends. Yet, when cast out of the palace, they howl and gnash their teeth over the joys they have thrown away. Probably, being an oriental, he had begun howling and gnashing as soon as the King began to find fault with him (the word translated 'speechless' really means 'muzzled'), and the King's words 'There (i. e., outside in the darkness) shall be the weeping and the gnashing of the teeth' are the equivalent of a modern host's saying, 'You'll have to do that sort of thing outside.'"

"When, and how long has prayer for our beloved dead been used in the (Episcopal) Church?"

"Prayer for the dead has existed in the Christian Church from the very beginning. We find, for example, St. Paul (2 Tim. 1:10-18) praying for Onesimus [!] in language that can only be naturally interpreted as such a prayer. In fact it was a recognized practice among the Jews to pray and offer sacrifice for the dead (2 Macc. 12:42-45). In the Anglican Church these prayers were clearly expressed in the First Prayer Book (1549). In the subsequent revisions they were retained in rather vague and indirect form until they were clearly and definitely restored in the American Prayer Book of 1928, our present use." T. L.

**Is Arminianism "Another Gospel"?**—*The Presbyterian Guardian* (January 25, 1945), under this heading, discusses the charge of several commissioners at the last general assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, that Fundamentalists who are Arminian in their theology are preaching "another gospel." The writer of the article admits that indeed many prominent theologians, such as D. L. Moody, R. A. Torrey, James M. Gray, and a host of Bible-believing preachers of the present day, have strains of Arminianism in their message. These, however, he declares, are not preaching "another gospel," but only an "inconsistent expression.

of the true gospel," or an "inconsistent view of the cross." Of this also the Lutherans [he expressly mentions "Walter A. Maier and his fellow-pastors of the Missouri Synod"] are guilty; for he writes: "The Arminians and Lutherans affirm fervently the message of the cross. They beseech men most earnestly to trust in the atoning work of Christ. But they give the atonement a *universal reference* (italics our own). They preach that Christ paid the penalty for the sins of *all men* (italics our own). With haste they add that not all are saved, but only those who accept Him. What happens to the rest? They perish! Why? Because of the sin of unbelief." The writer then says: "Calvinists claim that this statement of the atonement is erroneous. If Christ paid the penalty for the sins of all men, then all must be saved. Since this is not true, the death of Christ, though sufficient for all, was designed only for His people" [i. e., *the elect*; italics our own]. It is clear that the writer, when speaking of Arminianism, has in mind, not man's cooperation in his conversion, a doctrine which we Lutherans usually think of when referring to Arminianism, but the Scriptural doctrine, held by the Arminians against the strict Calvinists, that the atonement is not confined to the elect, but is universal. In other words, against the Calvinistic *gratia particularis* the Arminians defend the *gratia universalis*. But this is not an "inconsistent expression of the true gospel," but the plain Scriptural truth, as every Christian knows who has studied the Scripture passages under Question 183 of our former synodical Catechism (cf. Ezek. 33:11; 1 Tim. 2:4; 1 Pet. 3:9; Matt. 23:37; Acts 7:51; Hos. 13:9). On the other hand, strict Calvinism teaches an "inconsistent view of the cross" when it denies the universality of the atonement on the rationalistic premise: "If Christ paid the penalty for the sins of all men, then all must be saved. Christ, though sufficient for all, was designed only for His people." But really this is more than an "inconsistent view of the cross." It is "another gospel," in so far as it deprives the majority of men of the comfort offered them in the universal Gospel promises and so destroys the Scriptural basis of their personal assurance of salvation. Since, moreover, alarmed sinners cannot trust in the universal Gospel promises for salvation, they are compelled to rest their *certitudo salutis* on the Holy Spirit's operation within them or their *illuminatio interior*. Ultimately, Reformed believers must base their salvation on *good works*, since in this life they cannot know whether they are elect or not and they dare not apply to themselves the precious consolations of the Gospel. Those who deny the *gratia universalis* must therefore in the end also deny the *sola gratia*. Let Calvinists give up the rationalistic axiom: "If Christ paid the penalty for the sins of all men, then all must be saved." That certainly is not the doctrine of Holy Scripture.

J. T. M.

**Should the Pastor Go into Politics?**—Referring to a letter of Dr. John Bennett published in the *Christian Century*, another correspondent wrote as follows: "For twenty years I have been the pastor of poor people in this rural parish. These poor people all voted against Roosevelt. I voted for the Social ticket, and everyone in the parish knew it. I do not believe there is such a thing as a Protestant Church

where the people do not know how the minister votes. But what John Bennet was really against was, to quote him: 'I do not want to see the Church in politics.' I feel he is wrong here. Politics is social action or what we used to call application of Christian ideals to life. In the old days we had prohibition sermons. Prohibition was a political issue. If the Church does not take a stand on such issues when they are clear cut, then the Church will not lead the people in Christian ways. The most difficult thing in life is to decide how to apply the Christian principles. Those of us who want peace and racial or industrial justice must work for it by choosing sides in the field of politics. I know that the people of a parish want a minister who is not afraid to open himself to attack. It seems to me that John Bennett's stand that the Church should not enter politics is confusing and inconsistent in one who deplores the secularization of society as he has in the past. Religion and life are one. They are not separate compartments. Preachers and theologians who felt that we should not preach social action came out openly for war the moment war loomed up. They did not consider themselves secular on entering this field of applied ethics. They called themselves realists. I honor those who openly advocate war if they believe it is God's will. But I will do my best to show my people why they are wrong. In such conflict a way will be found. Individually we make such choices, and now that we are organized into churches, we must still make such choices. This issue cannot be side-stepped by calling it politics."

Is the argumentation convincing? We think not. The Church as such has no business in politics because its guide, the Bible, does not inform it with respect to the pending political questions and issues unless a moral aspect should be distinctly involved. The minister should be so busy preaching Christ, and Him crucified, that he has no time for politics as a profession. Where moral issues arise on which the Bible pronounces, naturally the teaching of the Bible has to be communicated to the congregation. The Church's and the pastor's authority end where the Bible teachings end.

A.

**The Reformation: The Age of Faith.**—The *Theologische Quartalschrift* (January, 1945) offers a very timely and instructive article under this heading, written by Dr. H. A. Koch. The essay may be summed up in the statement: The age of faith is not to be sought in the Middle Ages, but faith, in the Christian sense, characterizes the Reformation. The article is a confutation of the assertions of Father Walsh, one-time professor of the Roman Catholic Fordham University in New York, in his book (1907) *The Thirteenth, the Greatest of Centuries* and in his contributions to the latest edition of the *Encyclopedia Americana*. Walsh believes that the Reformation was a religious revolt and as such the source of agnosticism, unbelief, and atheism. This is not a new thought, yet one which requires constant refutation. Dr. Koch writes: "Let us not be misled by glib statements made by Romanists. Let us rather cling to the bare facts. These facts do not reveal the thirteenth century as a century of faith, but rather as one of gross superstition, still having the form but lacking the essence of true religion. By superstition we

mean every form of religion that is not based on the Word of God. Rome's religion is essentially based on the word of man, the Pope and human tradition; the truths of the Word of God are distorted to fit into the Papal world-view." Step by step the writer proceeds to prove his thesis. Describing the Reformation as an act of faith, he says: "Through the force of the Scriptures and the living faith in him Luther was driven on from conclusion to conclusion until he finally came to the inescapable conclusion that the Pope is the Antichrist, revealed in the prophecy of 2 Thess. 2. If the doctrine of justification is the key to the correct understanding of the Scriptures, which it truly is, and justification through faith in Christ is the only way to salvation, then the Pope, who denies this basic truth, must be the Antichrist, the man who seats himself in the Temple of God and claims he is God by pretending to know and to offer the only way of salvation. The Church of Rome has fixed its doctrinal tenets in the Council of Trent. . . . The Papists at Trent were agreed on one point: all errors of Luther resolve into the one point, justification through faith alone. That doctrine is damnable heresy. Must not he who denies the Scriptural way of salvation and propounds another through faith and good works be the Antichrist? We shall quote an arch-Catholic to prove that Roman theologians see clearly in this matter and give astounding utterance to that inescapable conclusion: Kiefl, a dean of the Cathedral of Regensburg in Germany, writes: 'If the dogmatical fundamental idea of Luther was correct that God alone is efficacious in spiritual matters and every co-operation of man is a blasphemy, then a church with the demands such as the Catholic Church must raise, must be the work of the devil and the Pope as Vicar of Christ, the Antichrist.' The Papists at Trent saw the essential difference; the Papists of today do, too, but not all Lutherans. . . . Rome rejects the doctrine of salvation through faith alone and curses the Scriptural doctrine. How, then, can the thirteenth century, with its scholastic theology, be the age of faith, or even more so, the whole period of the Middle Ages? On the other hand, it becomes evident to all who want to see and accept the truth that the sixteenth century with its inauguration of the Reformation is an age of faith, because it returned to the faith of the apostles." The article is well worth studying, just as are others which the issue offers.

J. T. M.

**The Present Position of Unitarianism.**—Writing to the *Christian Century*, Dr. Frederick May Eliot, president of the American Unitarian Association, residing in Boston, Mass., makes a statement on the present-day doctrinal position of his denomination. "The editorial 'A Regrettable Action' in the *Christian Century* for Dec. 13, contains several statements about contemporary Unitarianism that are far from accurate. It is simply not true to say that 'there is a strong trend away from old-fashioned Unitarianism toward a profounder appreciation of the truth in the Trinitarian conception of God as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.' Whatever else Unitarians may be doing, they are not moving in the direction of an acceptance of the doctrine of the Trinity, no matter how skillfully modern apologists may interpret that doctrine as 'an inestimable explanation of actual Christian experience.' Neither 'theistic Unitarianism'

nor any other variety is 'in the process of abandoning' the traditional monotheism of Channing and Martineau for the sake of adopting 'the Christian conception of God as a trinity in unity.' Many Unitarians are indeed interested in 'a radical advance,' but not in reverse gear." These are definite words. Whoever desires to honor the Triune God cannot fellowship Unitarians.

A.

**"Director of Religious Education."**—In an interesting article published in the *Presbyterian* of Jan. 11, 1945, attention is drawn to a special endeavor in the Church which can be assigned to women. We quote: "Within the last fifteen years or so a great new profession for girls has been growing up, 'Director of Religious Education.' This profession requires a college education, plus two years of Bible education, leading to an A. M. in Religious Education. These girls are not just the old 'pastor's secretary' type of office girls. They are the equal in training of the pastor himself. "They are 'commissioned' by the presbytery, though not ordained. They command salaries of \$1,500 to \$2,000—and earn them. One such girl in a large church had full charge of the Sabbath school and training of its workers and all other educational activities. She managed three Christian Endeavor societies; the Boy Scouts and Cubs; the Girl Guides, and summer 'retreats' for all of them. She had charge of all daily vacation Bible schools, shared as church representative in all District conventions or State conferences, and took her turn leading (?) weekday meetings. She did all the visitation work among youth and all dealing with young people as to their souls. She superintended all the social events of the church, the special programs where youth were involved. She 'pinched hit' at the pipe organ on occasion and at the piano at any time. The pastor was set free to do his own special job. If we had one thousand such girls today, we could place them, 500 in our churches, 300 on the foreign field, and 200 in national missions. They would more than double the impact of the Church upon the communities. Yet few of our girls ever heard of this opportunity."

This describes to some extent the work our Christian day-school teachers are doing. It is interesting to see that in circles outside of our own the importance of work of this nature is beginning to be realized more and more.

A.

**Public Money Diverted for Catholic Schools.**—In spite of a half century of effort to stop Roman Catholic infiltration into public funds available for Indian education, that Church still receives substantial sums from the United States Treasury through the Bureau of Indian Affairs of the Department of the Interior. This was revealed at the recent meeting of the Home Missions Council, which is reported on page 116. The history of this long struggle, which is so far largely unsuccessful, provides yet another illustration of the meaning in practice of the Catholic theory that the state is obligated to support the church and to open its resources for the maintenance of the church's schools. As long ago as 1897, Congress declared it to be the policy of the government to make no appropriation for the education of Indian children in any school maintained by a religious sect. Again in 1917 another law was passed which stated that



"no appropriation of the treasury of the United States should be used for the education of Indian children in any sectarian school." Nevertheless, the flow of funds has continued. In 1943 the substantial sum of \$146,500 was appropriated for this purpose. In that year the Senate Indian Committee on appropriations ordered an investigation of "all mission school contracts." As a result, the Indian Bureau recommended a decrease of \$52,250 in the appropriation for 1944 for mission contracts. But the final report of the bill contained the full amount. What had happened? Four "off-the-record" hearings were held. Congressmen Case and Mundt of South Dakota, where several of the schools are located, appeared to plead for the retention of the appropriations. It is not difficult to guess the source of the pressure that was brought to bear on them.

Editorial in *Christian Century* of Jan. 24, 1945

**Roman Catholicism in Countries South of Us.**—The following correspondence of the *Christian Century* (Jan. 31, 1945) coming from Lima, Peru, is significant. The correspondent writes under date of Jan. 8: "A government decree given Jan. 4 and published in newspapers here two days later restricts the freedom granted Protestant groups by a constitutional amendment in 1916. The decree provides that all worship except that of Roman Catholics, 'which the State protects according to the Constitution,' shall take place only in 'already existing temples, and expressly forbids non-Catholic meetings or other propaganda in parks, plazas, or other public places. Anyone violating the decree is to be denounced as offending Article 393 of the penal code and prosecuted by the political authorities and the police. Peru was the last country in America to reform its legislation in favor of liberty of worship. Since 1916 the constitution had provided in Article 232: 'Respecting the sentiments of the majority, the State protects the Roman Catholic apostolic religion. Other religions enjoy liberty of the exercise of their worship.' The present decree sets aside this liberty. In most towns and in many villages of Peru there are now organized Protestant congregations, and it has been known for some time that the hierarchy is alarmed; last year they publicly called on Catholics to fight the Protestants. In a recent speech the papal nuncio stated that Peru is in danger not only of Protestantism, but also of being overrun by the Greek Orthodox Church, which he somehow linked with Columbia. Several Senators denounced the speech in the Senate, regarding it as an unjustified attack on a friendly neighbor."

An editorial of the *Christian Century* of the same date submits additional information. "At the same time there comes from Mexico the full text of a pastoral letter sent by the Archbishop of Durango and the four bishops of his province. The four closely printed pages of this pronunciamiento are entirely devoted to blasting Protestantism as 'the peak of heresy . . . a North American heresy [which] necessarily forms an appropriate atmosphere for ulterior incursions, mercantile, social, etc. . . . poisoned fountains' promoted by 'false missionaries, who come to preach lies.' 'Luther . . . stole from a convent the nun Catherine Borer [sic], gave himself to drink, professed . . . the impossibility of fighting victoriously against licentiousness.' Mexican Protestant workers, of

whom it is admitted that there have come to be a good many, are 'apostates moved by a mercenary interest and deluded by a fat salary.' The satanically inspired North American Protestant sects, in their effort to 'tear the Catholic faith from the hearts of the Mexicans and drag them to Protestant heresy, craftily establish 'schools, academies, nurseries, dispensaries, athletic societies, clinics, all with apparent great philanthropy.' In view of all this, 'we [the bishops] renew our prohibitions: No Catholic can attend Protestant churches or religious services organized by Protestants. No Catholic can attend schools . . . or other institutions which are Protestant dependencies.' It is further commanded that the 'campaign of books and pamphlets against Protestantism be intensified' and that 'all the rosaries said for one year be offered asking that Protestantism shall not prosper in this country.'"

The editorial properly remarks, "Well, these documents should help Protestants and others to understand Roman Catholicism, which prides itself on being the same everywhere and always." A.

**Brief Items.**—The announcement is made in the religious press that this fall the revision of the American Standard Version of the New Testament will be published. Prof. Luther A. Weigle, who is chairman of the committee entrusted with making the revision, is responsible for this piece of news. The publication is awaited with very live interest.

Congregationalists have 173 missionaries in the foreign field who are at liberty, while 21 are interned, and 4 are in uniformed Government service. The statement is made by Fred F. Goodsell, Vice-President of the American Board, that this Board needs 191 recruits for the various fields in foreign lands.

"Today (February 6) the Archbishop of York and the 8 bishops forming the Royal Commission, in session in the crypt of St. Paul's, confirmed the appointment of Dr. Geoffrey F. Fisher to succeed Dr. Temple as Archbishop of Canterbury. It had been their task to investigate and approve each step taken in that appointment. They determined that the king had nominated Dr. Fisher, that no valid objection to his election had been raised, and that his election was duly made according to law by the dean and chapter of Canterbury Cathedral. The historic proceedings in the crypt were carried out with the dignity and reverence which became them. They gave opportunity for anyone who wished to raise an objection. Only one was heard; an elderly layman from the Isle of Wight rose to declare that 'God cannot and will not approve of the preferment of those who believe merely in policies of compromise.' What precisely was in his mind was not explained. It may be some time before the solemn ceremony of enthronement can take place."—London Correspondent in the *Christian Century*.

"The U. L. C. A. has 70 per cent of its membership in centers of over 2,500 population and only 30 per cent in so-called rural areas. The Synodical Conference is 58 per cent urban and only 42 per cent rural. But we of the American Lutheran Conference still have 56 per cent of our people in rural areas and only 44 per cent in centers which

have a population of over 2,500. — Dr. L. M. Stavig in the *Lutheran Outlook*.

An editorial in the *Watchman-Examiner*, whose editor belongs to the Northern Baptist Convention, says: "We have already lost Rochester University, Brown University, and now Chicago University. The process is understandable, because Northern Baptists have set up their schools on an autonomous basis. Their boards of trustees being self-perpetuating, the Convention has nothing to say about possible trends. Southern Baptists have sustained a vital relationship to their schools; consequently, so far as we know, they have not lost any of them. If the trend in Northern Baptist higher education continues, it is easy to foresee that it is only a question of time when they will have no institutions of higher learning at all."

Dr. Purves [Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis at Princeton Seminary and later on pastor in New York] always wrote out his sermons in full. He took them to church with him, but kept them in his coat pocket and preached extemporaneously from his memory of the sermon. His main reason for writing out the sermon was so as to think it through carefully before delivering it. — *Presbyterian* of Jan. 4, 1945.

The Christian University Association of America has purchased the P. A. B. Widener estate of thirty-three acres in Elkins Park, Philadelphia. The prospectus says that probably in the first year "Courses will be restricted to the college of arts, with graduate work offered in such subjects as history and philosophy. As soon as possible, other courses such as Education, Business, Law, will be added. The university will probably be co-educational. The basis of the Association is the Bible." The Association also adopts as standards, subordinate to the Word of God, the Helvetic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort, approved or formulated by the Synod of Dort, and the Confession of Faith, the Large Catechism and the Shorter Catechism, formulated by the Westminster Assembly, as setting forth the system of truth taught in the Holy Scriptures. In other words, the theology represented by the Association is definitely Reformed.

Of the population of Boston, 74.3 per cent are Roman Catholics, according to figures relayed by *Time* from the *Pilot*, official publication of the Boston archdiocese. Percentages in other cities are also given by the news magazine as compiled by Catholic Bishop John F. Noll of Fort Wayne, Ind.: New Orleans, 54; Providence, 57; Detroit, 46; St. Louis, 43; Chicago, 41; Philadelphia, 29; New York, 22. — *Christian Century*.

"The women of Memphis want the right to serve on juries. A proposed bill which Memphis clubwomen and bar association leaders say will clear the legal path to the jury box has been submitted to the committee on legislation of the local bar association. Similar bills have been presented to the general assembly in the past without success." This report is found in the *Christian Century*. Thinking of these women trying to put a political burden on themselves, we cannot help ejaculating, *O sancta simplicitas!* A.

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## Book Review

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All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis 18, Mo.

**The Seventy Weeks and the Great Tribulation.** A Study of the Last Two Visions of Daniel and the Olivet Discourse of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Revised Edition.) By Philip Mauro. Bible Truth Depot, I. C. Herendeen Swengel (Union Co.), Pa. 279 pages.

The present volume is a revision of the first edition, which appeared just twenty years ago. "I have found less need than might be expected for corrections and additions," says the author in an appendix in which he brings his material up to date by referring to present-day tribulations and anti-Semitic violence. It is not an easy task which the author undertakes in this book. "Our object in the present series of papers is to bring before our readers some results of recent studies of the prophecy of the 'seventy weeks' (Daniel 9) and of the Lord's discourse on Mount Olivet (Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21), in which he applied and expanded a part of that prophecy." What a job for a layman! But Mr. Mauro has studied the Scriptures, and studied them with zeal, acumen, and faith. As we read his book, we marvel at the depth as well as the scope of Scripture knowledge and understanding to which he has attained. All this was achieved without the use of the ancient languages—a tool which we often wished the author might possess for his task.

How perplexing the interpretation of the "seventy weeks" in Daniel and the Lord's reference to this prophecy can be will become clear if we briefly look at the variety of views that have been held among Lutheran exegetes on some phases of these utterances.

1. Luther himself regards the "seventy weeks" as seventy times seven years or a total of 490 years. In several sermons on the Gospel for the Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity and elsewhere he interprets the "seventy weeks" as coming to an end after the death of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem. While he makes application of these texts to his own time, he does not interpret "the abomination of desolation" as a prophecy of the Antichrist. In their context, he says, these words refer directly to the destruction of Jerusalem.

2. In an article in *Lehre und Wehre* (Vol. 31, p. 230 ff.) Dr. Stoeckhardt offers an interpretation which differs from Luther's in essential points. He says: "The 'seventy weeks' are an idealized time (*eine ideale Zeit*), . . . which embraces the era from the rebuilding of the Temple to the end of time." The "abomination of desolation" is a prophecy of the Roman Antichrist and his reign of terror.

3. In the following year, 1886, there appeared an article in *Lehre und Wehre* over the name of H. Kanold which takes issue with Dr. Stoeckhardt's view. This writer appeals to Luther and Calov and endeavors to show that the "seventy weeks" are 490 calendar years and that they do fit into the dates of history. This definite era, he says,

began in the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus (Neh. 5:14) and ended with the death of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem. "The abomination of desolation" does not refer directly to the Antichrist but is fulfilled in the words of Luke 21:20: "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh."

4. For confirmation of his view Kanold also refers to an earlier article in *Lehre und Wehre* (Vol. 16, p. 74) on the prophecies of Daniel and signed G—r, P.

Mr. Mauro's interpretation agrees with Luther's and Kanold's in these essential points: (1) he regards the "seventy weeks" as  $70 \times 7$  years; (2) these 490 years came to an end with the destruction of Jerusalem; (3) the "abomination of desolation" is not the abomination of the Antichrist but was fulfilled in the horrors of the destruction of Jerusalem. Mr. Mauro does not agree with Luther and Kanold as to when these 490 years began. He brushes aside all secular chronologies based on ancient records as unreliable and insists that the 490 years began when the release of the Jews was decreed by Cyrus. The first year of Cyrus according to Mauro is 457.

In the course of his study of the last chapters of Daniel the author also definitely identifies many historical events and persons on the basis of the prophetic word: Alexander, various Seleucids, several Ptolemies, the Maccabees, Herod, Cleopatra, Mark Antony, Augustus. But in spite of his literal interpretation of the "seventy weeks" and the identification of historical events and characters as prophesied by Daniel, it is gratifying to find no millennialism in this book. Mr. Mauro insists that the time of the second coming of Christ is and shall remain a secret.

The reader will want to put some question marks on the margin of the book, e. g., on the pages that speak of Kaiser William II and Adolf Hitler as a revelation of the Antichrist; on the pages that interpret the passage, Dan. 12:2: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the ground shall awake," etc., as a spiritual awakening from unbelief; and others. But he will also find much sound Scripture doctrine, e. g., the deity and the mediation of Christ.

W. R. ROEHRS

**Proceedings of the Thirty-Eighth Convention of the Ev. Lutheran Synodical Conference**, assembled at Cleveland, Ohio. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 115 pages,  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ . 20 cents.

For various reasons this is a report of special interest and importance for all pastors and laymen interested in the welfare and the work of our Synodical Conference. Here we have Dr. Fuerbringer's last official address and report as President of the Ev. Lutheran Synodical Conference, in which capacity he served for seventeen years. In appreciation of his faithful services he was given the title of Honorary President of the Synodical Conference.—Here we have a very timely and interesting doctrinal essay by Prof. E. Reim on "The Church and Christian Liberty," in which the essayist brings out that this liberty is a glorious gift in which the Church has an inexhaustible subject for profitable study and wholesome contemplation; that the basic truths concerning this liberty constitute a treasure so priceless that the Church must guard them with unflagging zeal; that the proper exercise of this



liberty among brethren is a matter of such importance that neither Church nor individual may deny these obligations of true Christian fellowship. The essayist pointed out with great candor some of the dangers threatening this precious gift, warning against tendencies which might deprive us of this liberty or might lead to its abuse, and exhorted his audience to guard this privilege in every manner possible. — Here we have a very extended report of the Board for Colored Missions, covering our various fields in America and in far-off Africa. — Here we have the proposed Constitution for the organization of the Negro congregations of the Ev. Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America, action on which, however, was deferred. — We have also the report of the Survey of Negro Missions made to the Conference by a committee of three men appointed by the President of the Synodical Conference for the purpose of instituting a thorough review of our colored mission work, with the hope of improving methods of operation and effecting economies. This report offers recommendations for the re-organization of our Negro Missions, for the creation of regional mission districts, for procedure in discipline cases, for defining the duties and powers of the general Board, and on the continuation or closing of some of our colleges and seminaries. This report was carefully considered by a committee, which offered fifteen resolutions to the convention and whose recommendations were adopted.

TH. LAETSCH

**Cross and Affliction.** By the Rev. R. C. Rein. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 77 pages, 7½×5¼. 40 cents.

This is a revised and enlarged edition of the author's book published several years ago. It met with such favor that a new edition became necessary. Its 77 pages offer ten meditations on the Christian's cross, eighteen on the Christian's afflictions, and a few prayers and Scripture readings. Its attractive make-up, the pages being held in the cream paper cover by a blue silk cord, and especially its contents combine to make this a very suitable gift for people going through God's school of trial and tribulation.

TH. LAETSCH

**Gethsemane to Calvary.** Olin S. Reigstad. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minn. 131 pages, 5½×8. 1944. \$1.00.

The pastor of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Minneapolis presents another volume of Lenten sermons, including Sunday mornings in Lent, Good Friday, and Easter, and a special series of Midweek Lenten sermons.

The book reveals a simple and straightforward homiletic method, namely, a direct utilization of the text and a genuine submission to the intended sense of the Word. To this reviewer the treatment of Matt. 21:1-9 and of the texts from Isaiah 53 proved unusually interesting in this respect. The goals and purposes of the pericopal texts in the collection did not seem quite as unified and clear as those of the series of free texts.

In some instances the effort to capture a cadence or to refine the individual sentence seemed to interfere with the clarity and the perspective of the whole. Some turns of phrase, however, were quite

suggestive and stimulating. And the author blew a most certain trumpet, in every instance, on the great theme of the Vicarious Atonement. Isaiah 53, particularly, rang fresh and true in his treatment.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

**The Pilgrim.** O. P. Kretzmann. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 1944.  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ . 137 pages. \$1.50.

These selections originally appeared in the *Cresset*, the monthly review published by the Walther League, in the column entitled "The Pilgrim" and conducted by the editor, now the President of Valparaiso University.

Dr. Kretzmann's prose has become deservedly beloved. It gives the illusion of being distilled slowly and hence of surmounting the clutter of haste out of which so many of us must write or think. It browses leisurely in many pastures, holds up flowers from many fields, and then returns us to be best satisfied with the wisdom of God in Christ Jesus. It takes pains to say its thoughts by means of a complete craftsmanship, satisfied not merely to hammer ideas together, but to refine their statement to an ultimate simplicity. This volume will be useful in answering the question, many years from now, whether Dr. Kretzmann's chief desert was the opening of unaccustomed vistas of thinking or the helping of our Church to a truer English—or both.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

**From Tragedy to Triumph.** Charles A. Behnke and Herman W. Bartels. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 117 pages. 1944.  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ . \$1.00.

The pastor of St. Mark's Church of Rochester, New York, and the pastor of Grace Church of Cleveland Heights, Ohio, each contribute a series of Lenten sermons to this slender volume. The first is entitled "Prayer in the Passion History" and the second "Peace Through the Cross." The sermon themes are centered in the respective topics.

Pastor Behnke is known in the Church for his close interest in psychiatry and his ministry to the individual. His preaching method reflects this trend. He draws on the Passion Story not merely for the insight into the Savior's work of redemption, but applies its facts to the individual's own inner problems. His language is direct and functional.

Pastor Bartels manages a slightly more sonorous cadence and cuts a wider swath of allusion and language.

Both series reveal the same effort to reach the soul of the hearer with the fact of the Atonement by saying it clearly and winningly.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

**Lands Away.** Earl Marlatt. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn. 1944. 179 pages,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$ . \$1.50.

The Dean of Boston University School of Theology submits a series of essays providing a survey of modern literature—fiction, drama, essay, and poetry—with the endeavor to point out interpretations of man's spiritual and religious nature.

His gleanings do not always reveal men at the climax of their quest in Christ Jesus; frequently the writer and his subjects are satisfied with a humanism and deism quite short of the Christian goal. The author's

use of previously printed material makes him repetitious in several instances.

The little book is most useful, however, in bringing home a sensitiveness to the spiritual in current literature, which many of us had thought sold out to materialism. The excerpts of Ridgely Torrence and Robinson Jeffers prove, among others, to be most stimulating. The author writes with an easy and relaxed competence.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

**Physical Education for Elementary Grades.** By Elmer A. Seefeld, M. E. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 240 pages. 9×6. Paper cover. \$1.75.

Modern education properly stresses the harmonious development of body and mind. In the past the physical side of education was often woefully neglected or at least not sufficiently stressed in school activities. Here is a book that deals with the body side of education. The author has had wide experience as a teacher of physical education and is eminently well qualified to write on the subject. Every page of the book betrays the experienced and practical teacher.

In the first section the author discusses general principles of physical education and general and special aids for the teacher. In the second part, courses for each of the eight grades of the elementary school are outlined in detail. The course for each grade is introduced with a brief discussion of the physical, mental, and social characteristics of the children of that specific grade. This is followed by a statement of the physical, mental, and social objectives to be gained by physical education. And finally the author furnishes a very complete outline and a great variety of exercises, games, dramatizations, stunts, rhythms, and songs, etc., on the basis of which the teacher will be able to build an interesting and a rich program of physical education. The instructions are clear and concise and supplemented by a unique kind of illustrations. The book contains a great wealth of helpful suggestions to the teacher. It ought to be on the teacher's desk of every parochial school of the Church. Boys' and girls' camp leaders, sponsors of Junior Walther Leagues, and all who have to deal with children will find this book very helpful. The value of the book is enhanced by an excellent bibliography. The print and its mechanical make-up are good, but it should have been bound in cloth rather than in paper.

A. M. REHWINKEL

**Merry Hearts and Bold.** By Witty, Fenner, and Nolen. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 438 pages. 8×6. Cloth. \$1.20.

This is Book V in the *Reading for Interest Series*. The stories and poems of this reader were selected by Barbara Nolen and illustrated by Fritz Kredel. Educational consultants were Paul Witty and Phyllis Fenner, adapted for Lutheran schools by William Bloom, William Kramer, and Alfred Schmieding.

This series of readers is well known to all teachers and requires no further recommendation. However, besides its usefulness in the school, the book might well find a place in the home and supply mothers with suitable and badly needed material for bed-time stories when the little ones persevere in their cries: "Mother, tell me another one!"

A. M. REHWINKEL

## BOOKS RECEIVED

*From Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.:*

**New Highways in Reading.** Practice Book IV by William Bloom and Elmer Huedepohl. Consultant: Alfred Schmieding. 60 pages,  $11 \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ . 45 cents.

**Music Reader for Lutheran Schools.** One Book Course. By J. Grundmann and B. Schumacher. Fifth Edition. 272 pages,  $8\frac{1}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ . \$1.50.

*From Wm. B. Eerdman's Publishing Co., 334 Pearl St., N. W., Grand Rapids 2, Mich.*

**One Master.** By Bertha B. Moore.

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